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ABSTRACT

This book investigates the educative role of theater in processes of social change and development, and considers how to evaluate the use of theater as a small-scale medium in realizing development projects based on a participatory or interventionist model. The book is in three major parts. Following an introduction and an introductory chapter, the first part (The Historical Antecedents of 'Theater for Development) is concerned with the formation of theories which form the basis of the book's approach. Part 2 (From Traditional to Popular Theater: Historical Case Studies from Asia, Latin America and Africa) consists of a description of the historical development of theater as an educative medium in development processes in the Third World. Part 3 (Theater for Development: Performing Arts as Instruments of Intervention) presents a number of descriptions of theater used in clearly defined development projects. The book's 12 chapters are as follows: (1) Introduction; (2) Development and Change: People's Participation in Adult Education; (3) Popular Theater from a Social Scientific Point of View; (4) Popular Theater from an Educative Point of View; (5) Popular Theater from a Theater Historical Point of View; (6) Traditional Media for Publicity and Information Campaigns: Wayang Theater on Java and Bali; (7) Adult Education and 'Teatro Campesino' in Latin America: Mexico as an Example; (8) African Universities Hit the Road: From Travelling Theater to Theater for Development; (9) Theatrical Forms: Puppeteers and Crooners Participating in Mass Campaigns; (10) Learning Approaches: Shifting from Sector Policy in National Campaigns to Target Group Policy in Local Development Projects; (11) Target Groups: NGOs and the Marginalized Rural and Urban Poor; and (12) Conclusions. Thirteen pages of notes and a 23-page bibliography are attached. (SR)

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CESO PAPERBACK NO. 7

Theatre in Search of Social Change

The relative significance of different theatrical approaches

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The relative significance of different theatrical approaches

Kees P. Epskamp

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To my Parents

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I.
Introduction

During the last twenty five years there has been a perceptible tendency in developing countries to use theatre as an educative medium for social change and development. Worldwide, two different approaches in the use of theatre may be distinguished. The first approach stems from the autonomous processes of change which, on a community level, originated inside-out. This is known as 'endogenous' development. The second approach is project oriented, based on outside intervention. Initiatives here are based on decisions which are 'foreign' to the community or target group. In such a context, this is known as 'exogenous' development.

Every development project is, in fact, an outside intervention in an autonomous process of change. Some projects leave more room for an active contribution from the community or target group, and note the developments which are taking place locally. Here, use is made of a participatory approach. In other projects, the participation of the community or target group is limited to the minimum necessary and is operated along the lines of a strong interventionist model in the modernisation process.

When we apply these global distinctions of availability and approach in development projects to the use of theatre as an educative medium in all kinds of activities in the sphere of adult education, we see that with the first approach, most use is made of indigenous forms of expression in music, dance and theatre, while with the second approach, precisely new forms of educative theatre have been introduced.

The formulation of my research question, then, is concerned with a sociology of theatre within the framework of development processes. Every development process is, in fact, a learning process. Those involved learn in a manner different from that which is customary to them, according to their physical and social environment. The central question which this book must answer, then, is: what is the educative role of theatre in processes of social change and development, and how is the use of theatre as a small-scale medium to be evaluated in realizing development projects based on a participatory or interventionist model?

In order to answer this question, a number of forms of theatre will be reviewed to determine their contribution to the learning process. We are all too easily inclined to give the benefit of the doubt to the participatory approach in the use of theatre as an educative medium, as a contribution to the development process. There are, however, known examples where a clearly controlled intervention from outside has produced demonstrable results. The learning potential from theatre as an educative medium thus depends not only on the nature of the intervention, but also on the message, the context and the expressive qualities of the type of theatre used.

Different types of theatre, such as 'folk', 'court' and 'popular' theatre will be discussed in this book. The specific distinctions between these types of theatre will be presented in paragraph 3.2 of this book. However, in order to give an idea of how these various types relate to each other in a historical perspective, the most important categories of theatre forms have been drawn up in Figure 1 against historically important periods of development processes in the Third World.

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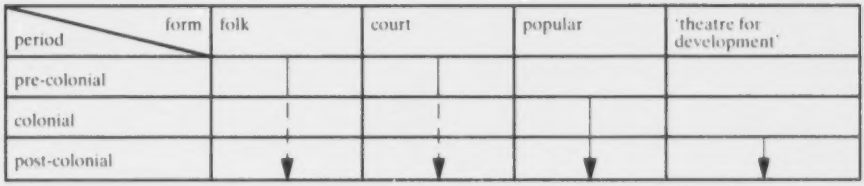

——— = the principal development period in which each form of theatre had its principal development

---------- = the period in which the theatre form survived

Fig. 1 Most important Types of Theatre Referred to in this Book

Following Castagnino (1963: 42) 'popular' theatre is tentatively defined as theatre that is, in general, associated with opposition to court and refined theatre forms, or with opposition to bourgeois theatre, or to all 'classical' theatre forms which are standard and which are generally used by the established order. Also included in popular theatre are forms which come under the heading of 'theatre for development'; forms which strive for explicitly educative aims in the development process.

The theoretical points of view in my argument are derived from critical pedagogy, from the history of the theatre and from the function of 'dialogue' within communication processes. Following an introductory chapter, part I of the thesis will be concerned with the formation of theories which are the basis of my approach. Part two consists of a description of the historical development of theatre as an educative medium in development processes in the Third World. Finally, as a normative evaluation, part three deals with a number of descriptions of theatre as it is used in clearly defined development projects.

My point of view in the field of critical pedagogy, is strongly influenced by the ideas of Paulo Freire, as derived from his 'pedagogy of the oppressed' (see: p. 19), in which an open dialogue is an important emancipatory development instrument. The question remains: is theatre for development, in concrete situations, an instrument which can be used against oppression? Wether or not use can be made of it depends on the measure of oppression, which is generally greater in situations of underdevelopment, as will be seen in the 'cases' in the following paragraph.

1.1. Breaking the 'culture of silence'

In Koitta, a small Hindu village 40 miles north of Dacca, I paid a visit to a small Moslem hamlet in 1983. There was no way of getting round the local judge, who awaited our team of foreign experts at the mosque, with an Omar Shariff hairstyle, speaking impeccable English and wearing a spotless jacket on top of his traditional sari. The mosque is a meeting place for wealthy and pious landowners at six in the evening. We told him we were interested in landless labourers. He insisted on obeying his village's law of hospitality and gave us one of the spokesmen in the village council to accompany us as our guide.

Five minutes later we arrived in a hamlet at the edge of the village. All one could see in the gloom, in front of the hut belonging to an elderly, defeated-looking peasant was the outline of the onlookers momentarily appearing in the twilight of an oil wick. There was a slight tension in the air. Seated together were our guide, with a wide smile, a landowner, sitting squeezed against his poor landless uncle opposite a group of foreigners and a Bengali interpreter who was obviously not a rural fellow. They knew we were staying at the PROS-

HIKA training centre nearby, an organization uniting landless labourers throughout the nation.

We asked questions, to both uncle and nephew, concerning landownership, the relative proportions of estates, the relations between rich and poor. The nephew owned 3 *bigha* (1 acre) of fertile land, which he tilled with about 20 labourers. It yielded 2 harvests a year, half of which was for himself. The other half was distributed among the labourers. In this he saw no injustice, but Allah's will.

Kadhem, a singer and drama teacher of Proshika began to sing of the injustice of the distribution of the land. We asked the old labourer what he thought of the song. 'Indeed, that is the way it is', said the old man. 'This song speaks my own heart'. Then why did he not clap his hands fervently, as his nephew, the landowner, did ? The old man stared at the ground and fumbled the rush mat on which he was seated. He mumbled that to clap would be a sign of consent, for which he might be hanged any day.

In Dacca, later on in the same tour I attended a performance which had been written and directed by a group named Aranyak. It was based upon the experience of a few Aranyak facilitators on their work in the village. The play was entitled *Sat Purusher Rin* (The Inherited Lending) and was based upon the question how the rural people could organize a play reflecting their own socio-economic problems.

When the curtain rose a rural village was conveyed, simply but effectively. Gradually, the audience realized that a villager was hanging from a tree. Was it murder or suicide? The villagers were impressed. It also shocked them that this should happen at the exact moment that an Aranyak facilitator visited them to teach them how to make a play by themselves with the limited means they had at their disposal. The Aranyak animator roused quite some suspicion with the notables of the village. Was it again one of those agitators with their newfangled ideas? But to the agricultural labourers and to the audience he quickly appeared to be a jolly fellow. On stage between the half nude labourers he was directly recognizable because of his city clothes. Soon he found out who could play music in the village, who could sing and who was the informal leader.

The problems of the village came up for consideration. They could not ignore the hanging. According to the farmers it was murder. When they told the story there was a beautiful 'stage'-hatred in their eyes. The daughter of one of the notabilities was on the side of the labourers. For a short span of time a romance seemed to develop between the Aranyak animator and the girl. But no! The moment they wanted to act out the life-story of the deceased, the Aranyak man was stoned. He escaped this straightforward act of aggression. But the next day when the *goondas* (a team of thugs) threatened to put a stop to the preparations for the performances, hell broke loose. The performance ended with a *tableau* of a fight. The labourers on top, their oppressors underneath.

The play lasted an hour. A lot of applause from the auditorium. And rightfully so! The theme was clear and recognizable. Touches of romance andclearly recognizable village types, illustrated the serious message. The set was beautiful and realistic. Artistically, the work done by Aranyak was very much appreciated by the audience. But for the Aranyak player it sometimes overshot the mark. The appreciation on the part of the critics, the publication of their plays, the invitations to come and do television work were no touchstones for the success originally aspired to. The limited censorship by the government clearly indicated this. The Aranyak protest had been ingeniously silenced.

How is one to make theatre for development in these circumstances, which are quite common in many Third World countries, and what effects would it have?

1.2. Four decades of 'theatre for development': outlining the plot

From a social scientist's point of view theatre can be studied from different angles. We can

study theatre as a social institution, that is, as an independent system with its own rules and conventions known and recognized by a large group of people within society. We can study theatre economically, as an industry, that is, as a group of people organized according to economic rules with productive and consumptive intentions.

Thirdly we can study theatre as an artistic process, as an event, of which both the result and the process are received as artistically valid.

Finally theatre can be studied as a performance, as a collective action of people which is in progress at the same time as it is perceived.

A theatrical performance, therefore, is understood as a situation, limited in time and space, in which a person A represents something or somebody else, while a person B is watching.

According to Schechner (1985:16) the artistic process of theatre has a seven-part sequence: training, workshops, rehearsals, warming-ups, performance, cooling-down, and aftermath. The analyses of the artistic process oftheatre in this book will pay attention particularly to training, workshops, rehearsals, performances and aftermath. Technical descriptions and analyses of warming-ups, performances and cooling downs have generally been left out. In this book I intend to explore the conceptualization as well as the implementation of theatre as a tool for development. As regards implementation, there are enough project descriptions to fill three volumes the size of this book. More difficulties are met with in writing a historical reconstruction of the conceptualization of theatre for development, because this requires both a diachronic and a synchronic study of the key concepts 'theatre' and 'development'. One person thinks of theatre as entertainment or as an artistic or cultural medium; the other thinks of theatre as a social or educative medium. One thinks of development in terms of technological and economic changes that will bring about structural improvements in the living situation of a population social, cultural or educational reform.

Both theatre makers and development workers want to put their audience, target group or clientele on a particular track. In short, both deliver a message in which the outward form has a bearing on the content. As will be apparent in the preceding, and as is reiterated schematically in Figure 2, where theatre and development work overlap in the social and educational potential they share. It is there that the concept of theatre for development finds legitimacy. Theatre can serve to put people on a track to improve their own living conditions.

In this book I intend to contribute both to the theory and the practice of theatre for development. In the first place by presenting a historical reconstruction of its conceptualization. In the second place, in the case studies I hope to place theatre for development, as an integration of two autonomous phenomena -theatre and development- in the context of history and local culture, in such a way that the continuous process of social change of the last four decades in the North Atlantic world as well as in the Third World are properly taken into account, to enable the researcher, theatremaker or development worker to assess its impact and educative value.

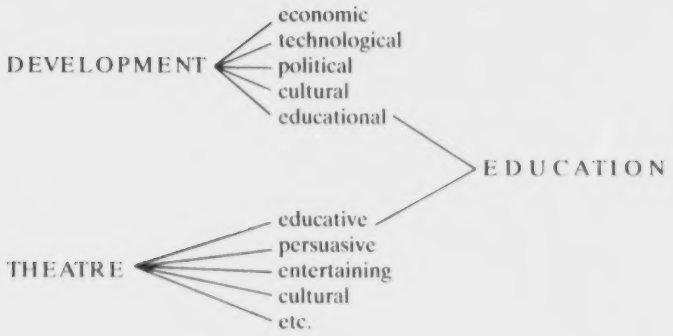

Fig. 2 Theatre for development: fields of influence

The book consists of three parts. After **Chapter II**, which looks at the history of forty years of development work, the **first part** of the book will concentrate mainly on outlining a conceptual framework of the defining terms for theatre for development and related concepts. This will be done according to the three research fields concerned with the concept: development, theatre and education. All three fields are examined for changes in the use of concepts relevant to 'theatre for development'.

Chapter III is an attempt at a social scientist's reconstruction of the conceptualization of 'popular theatre' and related concepts.

Chapter IV will concentrate on the educative aspect of 'popular theatre', while **Chapter V** will concentrate on the same subject primarily as formulated by performing artists.

The distinction made between the social scientist's, the educationalist's and the performing artist's point of view on popular theatre is somewhat artificial. However, this distinction is made to give the reader fuller insight into the complicated matter of the expanding terminology concerning popular theatre.

Part two examines indigenous and endogenous theatrical developments in what is called the Third World. These are forms of theatre in non-Western cultures, that have always filled a social, informative, persuasive and educative role. This part uses case studies to show why research into the history and global dissemination of theatre for development, legitimises or even demands cultural and historical relativity if we are to do justice to all its various forms. It therefore discusses the development of popular theatre in Asia, Latin America and Africa. Here, too, the country studies provided are exemplary.

Chapter VI deals with the long history of the informative, educative and persuasive use of traditional but still popular *wayang* theatre in Java (Indonesia).

The history examined in **Chapter VII** does not go back as far as that. Here we look at the use of theatre in Mexico for purposes of adult education, which dates back to 1920.

Chapter VIII looks at the history and development of theatre for development in the 'young', post-war and post-colonial African nations, experimenting with the development of new theatre forms. It deals with the history of Africa, the continent where the term 'theatre for development' was first used some ten years ago.

Finally, **part three** examines the current use of theatre for development as a tool of intervention in processes of social change. It is concerned with both sectorial policy in development work - that is, the use of theatre in the various social sectors - and with target-group policy - that is, the use of theatre for the benefit of the various target groups.

Chapter IX goes on to explore the use of theatre for development as an instrument of

intervention in the various development sectors, such as family planning and food and nutrition.

Chapter X focuses on the shift from sector policy to target-group policy as observed in the field of literacy, primary health care and adult education.

Finally, in **Chapter XI** we look not so much at the sectors wherein theatre is applied but at the target-groups it is meant to serve. These are the 'untouchables' and other marginal groups in India and the landless labourers in Bangladesh.

II.
Development and Change: People's Participation in Adult Education

The late 1940s and early 1950s saw, in what were then the overseas colonies, the start of massive education campaigns aimed at providing a minimum of education to the rural population as well as to the inhabitants of the young urban areas. When in the 1950s and 1960s more and more Third World countries acquired independence, United Nations organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF were instructed to streamline aid policy on a mondial level. In the 1950s projects concerned with education were called 'fundamental education'[1]. As for development in the rural areas, attention was paid on the one hand to large-scale campaigns, such as relating to immunization and literacy, on the other hand to community development. The agricultural development which was advocated on an international level was concerned, as for example in India, with land reform and initiating co-operatives. From their newly acquired independence the young nations aspired to non-violent social reforms in their countries.

In the mid-60s the corn gifts from the rich countries ceased to exist. The awareness had grown that these did not offer any structural solution to the developing countries. The Green Revolution was announced world-wide, which aimed at improving agriculture structurally by means of technical help from the North Atlantic world. Only then could self-sufficiency in food supplies grow in all countries. This approach counted primarily on the big privately owned farm estates. One of the results was that the small farmers were left in the lurch. They could not hold out next to the well organized concerns of the big landowners. They gave up their small businesses, went to work as hired agricultural labourers, or moved to the the city.

The large scale approach advocated by the Green Revolution in fact brushed aside all initiatives toward a fair distribution of land, as had beenissued in all kinds of reform bills less than ten years earlier. At first, the consequences of a changing rural economic situation, as outlined above, were not foreseen directly. Neither did anyone notice the fact that these large-scale agricultural businesses made the state dependent on foreign countries in another way. The dependence on the import of corn changed into a dependence on fertilizers, technical machinery and parts, and foreign industrial survey reports.

In the first half of the 1970s the idea of carrying out large-scale development projects was abandoned in favour of small-scale projects. Within the regions or villages a so-called integrated rural development strategy was applied, in which all sectors of developmental work, such as education, agriculture, literacy, health care, food and nutrition, were regarded as one integrated package. It was accepted that one sector was closely related to another sector, and that it made sense to pay attention to several sectors at the same time. It was concluded that basic education played a crucial role in this approach. By 'basic education' was meant:

> "(...) the minimum provision of knowledge, attitudes, values and experiences which should be made for every individual to develop his or her own potentialities, creativity

and critical mind both for his or her own fulfilment and happiness and for serving as a useful citizen and producer for the development of the community to which he or she belongs" (UNESCO 1974: 20).

Basic education primarily meant learning to read and write, and additionally gaining a minimum of knowledge on hygiene, health, child care and sanitation.

2.1. Literacy for adults: more than just learning to read and write

In the late 1960s, national and international organizations became aware that beside the national literacy mass campaigns, there existed a need for a more practical and productive approach to literacy, to which the name 'functional literacy' was given. Pioneers in this field were the French engineer Maguerez and the Brazilian educationalist Freire. Maguerez worked in various urban industrial enterprises (1960-1966) in Algeria and Morocco. He introduced what he called 'vocational-oriented literacy programmes'. Later on, UNESCO used Maguerez' ideas in setting up their Experimental World Literacy Programme in 52 countries.

Maguerez' job in North Africa was to organize on-the-job training for 'blue-collar' technical employees. His experiences formed the basis for the design of an integrated literacy method, in which he considered vocational in-service training and literacy as two aspects of the same learning process. He constantly referred to the importance of literacy as an integrated part of vocational training, fulfilling the needs and problems that the adult labourers experienced within their working situation. He made it a condition for motivating adults to learn how to read and write.

Maguerez' (1966) problem was how to promote development if one is working with people who are living in a transitional world; people who are not used to the Western way of visualizing machines by plans and models; people who have a different understanding of time and profit and measurements from that of Western people. The first step in giving these people a vocational in-service training was to teach them how to read and write. In short, Maguerez not only combined vocational training and literacy but he integrated them. Thus people were taught literacy and numeracy by examples from their daily working activities.

Following Maguerez' ideas, UNESCO launched functional literacy campaigns, in which 'functional literacy work' should be taken to mean any literacy operation conceived as a counterpart of economic and social development projects. In functional literacy training, practical skills and knowledge are integrated with learning how to read and write. Functional literacy is distinct from so-calledtraditional literacy in that it was no longer regarded as an isolated or distinct operation - let alone an end in itself - but made it possible to treat the illiterate as an individual in a group context, in relation to a given environment and with a view to development.

An increasing number of countries have since adopted a functional literacy approach in their national activities, modifying their mass education programmes or putting emphasis on providing literacy teaching for workers in specific sectors or in development areas. But integrating a functional literacy-component in each development programme is still a dreamed-of subject. Because adequate reading materials are missing, literacy in most cases is not retained after finishing the classes. There is a definite retrogression in literacy immediately following schooling.

However, the function of literacy is not restricted to the economic sector and the material side of life, though these two are based on certain values which differ from one society to another. There is also a more explicit functionality of literacy to the values of an individual and to society, which are handed down and formed by way of life and by culture. Only with consideration and respect for these values can one set up a functional literacy programme which promotes an 'endogenous development' of a country.

Furthermore, illiteracy is just one part of the grinding poverty of the sub-marginal living conditions of the majority of Third World peoples. Speaking of poverty, we can say that what once was a problem of conscience now has become a problem of justice. As long as educational systems are elite-focused, literacy projects will be no more than second-best educational substitutes. That is why literacy and education have to become part of a wider perspective of development for creating a just society. One cannot see literacy apart from a total development, if one is to give it the predicate 'functional'.

To put it in the words of Freire, literacy becomes 'functional' when it stimulates the process of 'conscientization'. Having devised and applied in practice a functional literacy programme in contact with living realities in the field, the participants will have gained the skills, knowledge, and the know-how needed to launch and run a full-scale operation of this kind on their own. In this approach development cannot be seen as purely socio-economic, but becomes part of a general process of 'emancipation' and 'liberation'.

2.2. Freire's literacy approach: target groups participate in their own development

The ideology behind Paulo Freire's 'functional literacy' approach, which he developed in Brazil, is quite different from that used by Maguerez. Both had a different focus, although there are many similarities in the actual methods.

Freire called his method the most radical educational revolution, because he made reading and writing a major tool for illiterates to explore and change their physical and social environment. He considered reading and writing a vital in the process of, what he called, 'conscientization'[2] which represented the development or the awakening of critical awareness. It will never come about as a natural byproduct of even major economic changes, but must grow out of a critical education effort based on favourable historical conditions. Freire's ideas about literacy projects are focused on the natural and cultural environment in which people are living.

According to Berggren (1975), Freire did not limit his approach to the working situation, but made 'man in society' subject to his literacy method. So, in Freire's ideas on literacy much attention was paid to the 'political' dimension of the world in which illiterates were living. He chose Recife, North-East Brazil, as a place to work out his ideas in practice, because this place is characterized by rural poverty and local political oppression. Freire had to leave Brazil because of changes in politics. He left for Chile, and taught at the University of Santiago. But, in Chile too politics were changing. Later Freire applied his functional literacy approach in Portugese speaking Africa (Guinea Bissau).

Freire (1968:115) started from an anthropological conception of the term 'culture', because the anthropological approach to culture '(...) clarifies the role of men in the world and with the world as transforming rather than adaptive beings'. To increase the critical understanding of the illiterate, the first dimension of his literacy programme content would be the anthropological concept of culture - that is, the distinction between the world of nature and the world of culture; the active role of men in and with their reality; the role of mediation which nature plays in relationships and communication among people; culture as the man-made addition to a world they did not make; culture as the result of men's labour, of their efforts to create and re-create; culture as a systematic acquisition of human experience (as creative assimilation, not as informationstoring); the democratization of culture; the learning of reading and writing as a key to the world of written communication (Freire 1976:46).

From that point of departure, the illiterate would begin to change in his former attitudes, by discovering himself to be a maker of the world of culture, by discovering that he, as well as the literate person, has a creative and recreative impulse (Freire 1976:97). Therefore, according to Freire (1976:48), the educator's role is fundamentally to engage in a dialogue with the illiterate about concrete situations and simply to offer him the instruments with

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which he can teach himself to read and write. This teaching cannot be done from the top down, but only from the inside out, by the illiterate himself, with the collaboration of the educator. That is why Freire tried to find a method which would be the instrument of the learner as well as of the educator.

Although agricultural extension work is educative, Freire (1976:93-94) says that the concept of extension does not correspond to an educational undertaking which is liberating, because of the persuading premises on which extension is based. To emphasize this element of persuasion in extension-work is to equate extension with propaganda. Extension tends to use the methods of propaganda and persuasion in the vast area which goes by the name of 'mass-media communication'. These methods constitute a means of issuing **communiqués** to the masses. Through such methods the masses are directed and manipulated, and because of this do not become involved in a liberating process of education. Freire's comments are directed at those who make use of such means by error, not for other reasons. One of the causes of the error is that when agronomists encounter the first difficulties in their attempt to communicate with the peasants, they do not realize that these are mainly caused by the fact that the process of communication between human beings cannot freely ignore socio-cultural conditioning. Instead of taking their own conditioning as well as that of the peasants into account, they simplify the question and conclude that the peasants are incapable of an adult's dialogue (Freire 1976: 141).

Freire's opinions on functional literacy training which combine the teaching of reading and writing with problem solving of the immediate basic needs of the target group in the different development sectors, such as nutrition and primary health care, were put into practice particularly in Alcantara in the state of Maranhao (Brazil). According to Drummond (1979: 12-15) it was a case of the combination of literacy training and the prevention of malnutrition with which the 'educatees', while taking part in the learning process of mastering writing, were at the same time made conscious of the importance of a more carefully balanced diet, using the means that were available in the class-room.

These kinds of initiatives and experiments to test out Freire's views in practice drew the attention of many international development experts. Indeed, in 1976, during the International Conference on Adult Education (ICAE) in Tanzania, the conference included a number of Freire's ideas,which were noticeable in the way adult education was defined in its *Design for Action:*

> "The term 'adult education' denotes the entire body of organized educational processes (...) whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development" (cf. Tandon 1982: 4).

As the function of literacy training became detached from vocational in-service training, and began to refer increasingly to social values and the fight for justice, adult education adopted an ever-growing politicizing nature.

2.3. Learning processes: the transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes

Education is the main agent of transfer and continuity of culture, says Dubbeldam (1984: 17), and it has the potential to support essential cultural elements as well as to alter them. Therefore, in most development activities there is an educative component for the transference of the required knowledge and skills, and of the attitudes needed for the follow-up of the project. This can vary from the simple dissemination of information to a special training

course. In any case, it is education which is not provided on a regular basis by any formal educational institute, i.e. by schooling.

Therefore it quite often happens that if formal education, such as that organized by a Ministry of Education, seems to be inadequate within the local context of an aid project, a development organization steps in to provide any form of educative activity such as training, literacy oradult education. According to Paulston (1974: ix-xvi), this education can be labelled non-formal education. It neither excludes nor stems from the formally organized, institutionalized, and hierarchically structured national educational systems. Nor does it require regular examinations of the pupils which automatically grant eligibility for proceeding to a next stage. (See figure 3.)

This is not to say that non-formal education is the same thing as informal education, which one learns casually by living in a particular socio-cultural context. Non-formal educational activities are not haphazard; they are systematically planned and organized. In short, 'school' belongs to formal education; adult education and information campaigns are non-formal education; and child-rearing, upbringing and socialization are part of the lifelong learning process of informal education.

Upbringing and education are important channels in the transfer of culture. In these learning processes, everything seems to revolve around the explicit transference of knowledge and skills of one generation to another. Yet, according to Leach (1968: 62):

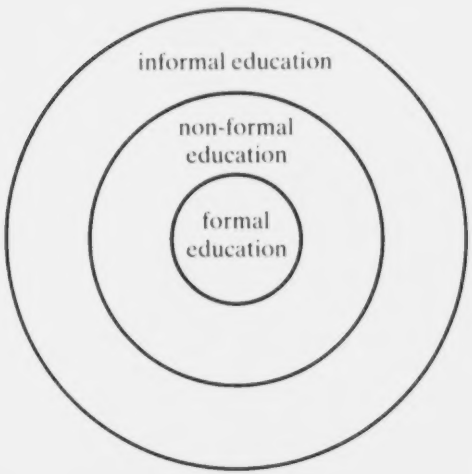

Fig. 3 Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Education (Source Paulston 1974)

> "Our ideas about education are themselves distorted by the process of classification. Education is 'what we do at school', it is a matter of acquiring knowledge, and knowledge is broken up into a variety of 'subjects': mathematics, geography, history, French and so on. This 'what we do at school' gets contrasted with 'what we do at home'. So the word 'education' suggests school life not home life."

As it became generally known that each learning process hid a curriculum, it was accepted

that not only the combination of subjects, at schools, but also the special training of youngsters during their initiation in the 'bush' contained a 'hidden curriculum'. Moreover, beneath the surface of learning the principle of an equilateral triangle or learning to tell the difference between edible and non-edible mushrooms, we find a whole package of unspoken cultural values and norms, which are the touchstones for a 'sane' worldview and for 'positive' social attitudes. Ultimately, these are the foundations which designate the learning process.

In the North Atlantic world, main-streams of thought about 'education' have always evoked counter-opinions.

> "That is why education has varied so prodigiously in time and space; (...); why it was ascetic in the Middle Ages, liberal in the Renaissance, literary in the seventeenth century, scientific in our time" (Durkheim 1956: 120)

Resistance against the intellectual approach to education regularly arose during the last century. Steiner, Montessori, Fröbel, Freinet and later on also Illich and Freire, all saw learning more as a creative than as an intellectual process. In their educational approach, they put the emphasis on learning by creative problem-solving which implied processes of change. They rejected the labour market as the education system's objective. For them, learning how to solve problems independently meant that educatees learned to be independent in giving a meaning to their lives. In order to realize these forms of education they developed new didactic styles. In contrast with the current intellectual and technocratic approaches to education, in the didactics of learning as a creative process the cultural and social context within which the learning processes took place was not lost out of sight.

Similar opposing forces in thinking about culture, education and development have taken place in Third World countries during the last decades. There, the educational systems are based on those of the previous colonial period and the medium of instruction in the educational system is often still the language of a foreign power. These countries see education, skill training and the transfer of knowledge more and more as instruments which should support the learners in maintaining or achieving a characteristic cultural identity, instead of building up a labour market for the sake of industrialization as the brittle pillar of progress. More and more attention is given to skill training as it had traditionally developed outside the context of 'schooling'.

A fine example of this is the acquisition of craftsmanship which is carried over from one generation to another and is directly tied up with a practised trade. Where schools are not available or accessible, the learning process of an apprentice being taught by his 'master' on the job is often considered a good alternative to any pre-service vocational training (Carton 1984: 34). Craft training, to remain with this example, literally means making oneself a master of something; learning by doing. From a culturally cynical perspective the promotion of this kind of indigenous craft training might be referred to as 'fringe development' of a country. From a view of cultural romanticism the stimulation of this kind of training will be welcomed and referred to as 'endogenous development' of a country, in which characteristic, culturally defined techniques, skills and artifactsare conserved or 'saved': the preservation of a simple fishing-boat instead of the acquisition of a trawler. At this moment, however, the small farmer, the landless labourer, the fisherman or herdsman does not benefit from either vision. His cultural 'luggage' motivates him not to be rash in dropping his traditional skill-training, his mastership and his esoteric knowledge. Nevertheless, he is fully aware of the existence of other ways of thinking, techniques and forms of instruction.

> "In short, rural people are not sheep who can be led blindly. They generally do not respond well to preaching and propaganda that fail to give them convincing reasons and new insights into why they should change their customary behaviour and practices.

This is the fundamental difference between an educational strategy and a simplistic propaganda strategy that underestimates the intelligence and psychology of rural people" (Coombs 1980: 31).

Furthermore, a fear of new, unknown methods can lead to a clinging to traditional, proven ways. Whatever way we look at it, both **our** and **their** views concerning education, culture and development arise from culturally defined norms.

2.4. The international development forum: participation in development

In this age of large and relatively well-known governmental and intergovernmental development co-operation agencies, says Hall (1986: 1), it may be useful to recall the days not so many years ago when these agencies did not exist:

> "Many of our bilateral agencies are quite young: some 19 years old, a few 20 years old and very few more than 30 years old. Even the United Nations system is a modern project, an institutionalized hope of a better world created after World War II. (...) In many countries, committees of citizens' organizations or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were responsible for channeling development assistance funds from the governments before state structures were put into place. The earliest efforts, of course were often linked to ideas of charity or even of religious conversion. But the history of development assistance also draws heavily on efforts from the beginning of this century by the trade union movements, the international cooperative movement, the librarians and such organisations as the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA)".

Development organizations can be divided into three main categories: supragovernmental, governmental and non-governmental. Supra-governmental organizations generally have a multilateral and international character. The best known examples are the organizations that are part of the United Nations (UN) such as the World Bank, the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Fund for Demographic Problems (UNFDP). These organizations serve the interests of their member states and in as concrete projects will therefore always adopt an attitude of subservience to the wishes of the government of the country where the project activities take place. This means that there are some countries in which these organizations do not operate.

Governmental aid organizations are extensions of the central government and its policies, and offer their services to the population in an active way, in national or regional campaigns or in specific local projects. Thus governmental aid organizations can be further distinguished in those functioning at a national, a regional or a local level. At whatever level these institutions, services or projects are offered, the objectives and policies dictating the aid activities will somehow always be related to policy-lines set out by a ministry or to ministerial decision-making. Although sometimes legally independent, in the last resort these organizations can only partially determine their own objectives and policies.

Non-governmental aid organizations (NGOs) are the result of private initiatives and are created initially without government help. It should come as no surprise that non-governmental groups played an historic role at the origin of what by now are large and sophisticated bureaucracies:

> "The thousands of NGOs (the Economic and Social Commission of the United Nations has a list of over 20,000 NGOs) have begun to strenghen links between themselves in their own nations, to build links within sectors (such as adult education), to create

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partnerships between other partners in the South, to link up with communities in the North and, in general, to provide a source of remarkable energy and diversity" (Hall 1986: 2-3).

They can be multilateral, like the Foster Parents Plan; they can operate internationally, like all of the co-financing organizations in the Netherlands such as CEBEMO, HIVOS, ICCO and NOVIB[3]; they can also be local, such as the small foundations, collectives or associations that are operative in local rural and urban communities in any developing country.

If we look at NGOs in developing countries, as Aremo (1983: 15-18) did, we see that most of them are the result of initiatives taken either by the local community or village, or a part of it; by an organization or institution in the area; by representatives of an overseas charitable organization; or by officials of the local, regional or national government. In all cases, they are judicially organized so that they are guaranteed the right to determine their own policies. According to Moore (cf. Buijs 1983: 167), some of these organizational forms grew out of traditional co-operative relationships that already existed within the community for purposes of farming, road construction, irrigation works, houseconstruction or domestic activities. Other voluntary organizational forms, such as the church and charitable organizations, were created during the processes of change which confronted the communities at local level.

In carrying out its activities, the NGOs relationship with the government continuously plays an important role. Galjart (1982:83) claims that these NGOs often have to perform a balancing act to survive political changes. There are governments, however, that actively delegate some of their responsibilities to NGOs, such as low-cost housing or adult education. As long as they attract funds from foreign donors for the benefit of small infrastructural and minor social improvements, their presence is tolerated.

Local aid organizations in developing countries generally operate with a minimum of paid, professional staff. They rely mainly on voluntary manpower. These NGOs often follow their own policies independently of the government, and they are far less bureaucratic than governmental aid organizations. Education plays a major role in the objectives or project proposals of these development organisations, which often explicitly make a point of organizing their activities with a high degree of target group participation. On paper, at least, members of the target group are very often drawn into both decision-making and the implementation of activities that they have planned more or less together with the target group (Silbermann 1979:95). This of course is not surprising, since these local aid organizations are relatively small with a minimum of vertical or hierarchical relationships between staff members.

To visualize the spheres of influence of a local development project, Buijs (1983:173) perceived a model in which the main point is the participation of the local population, or a specific target group, as the centre of a series of concentric circles. The members of the project organization and the participants of the project form the nucleus; the local social environment is the first circle; the bodies and persons offering supervision and assistance are the second circle, and thenational context is the outermost circle. The three circles in fact constitute the spheres of influence of the project.

Beyond these three circles, there is of course a fourth one indicating the influence of the international forums and 'think-tanks' of development theoreticians and multilateral development organizations. According to Kruyt (1986: 31) they tend to set new trends in attempting to foster development initiatives.

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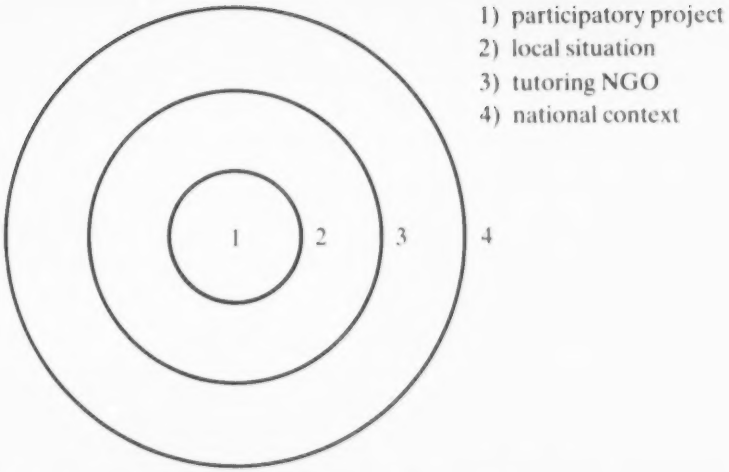

Fig. 4 Local Development Projects and Their Spheres of Influence (Source: Buijs 1983)

One of these trends in both the theory and practice of development work was the acknowledgement of indigenous knowledge and local, indigenous practitioners in the fields of food and nutrition, sanitation, health care and birth control (Awa 1987: 22-24). In addition to these development sectors, much attention was also given in the seventies to applied and policy-oriented research on indigenous systems of transferring knowledge[4], indigenous education, indigenous communication systems[5], architecture, and technology. Research on local and traditional technology in particular gave impetus to the development of 'intermediate' or 'appropriate' technology[6], designed to meet the basic needs of local populations in specific rural communities.

2.5. Indigenizing development: the renaissance of the barefoot expert

Under the influence of the growing body of social science research carried out in Third World countries, a number of international aid organizations, including those of the United Nations, became aware in the seventies of the fact that indigenous knowledge[7] sustained people for centuries in terms of food and nutrition, hygiene, health care, healing and medication, and agriculture. In regions of developing countries where North Atlantic influence had not yet penetrated, life and survival still depended on this age-old knowledge of nature.

It was discovered, for example, that the shifting cultivation practised by the Indians of the Amazon region in fact maintained highly refined micro eco-systems. It appeared that their neighbours, Indians of the Andes, not only distinguish about one hundred different species of wild potato, they also use about 200 different terms for the various sizes, colours and flavours of potatoes. At altitudes of 6000 to 7000 metres, with local climates that vary from tropical to polar, these people draw fine distinctions among species of grains, vegetables, fruit and tubers in terms of their edibility, method of preparation and food value, and these distinctions were passed on from generation to generation (Vietmeyer 1984: 37-38).

It was found out that before the coming of the Spaniards, the Aztecs who inhabited the Anahuac plateau in Mexico at an altitude of 2000 metres ate a protein-rich food they called

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tecuitlatl or 'stone excrement'. According to Clément (1971: 45-46), this food probably consisted of algae and was scooped from the lake, dried and roasted, in much the same way as women in Chad (Central Sahara) do nowadays with blue algae or *spirulina*, a micro-organism halfway between animal and vegetable.

As it was recognized that customs related to basic needs and survival, such as those regarding food, nutrition and food preparation are very difficult to change, U.N.-organizations urged that this knowledge be taken into consideration as far as possible in the projects sponsored by them. What people consider to be pure or impure meat, edible or inedible, a delicacy or standard fare, domesticated or wild animals, pests or 'noble' animals, varies from culture to culture, from religion to religion and from world view to world view. But there is almost always a reason behind these eating habits. This is why in the seventies a number of development agencies around the world that are concerned with information about food and nutrition began to take the customs of their clients seriously, and to investigate in depth the rationale that lay behind the indigenous choice and preparation of food.

Research of this type conducted around the world revealed, among other things, that cultures in isolated corners of the world manage to survive by reliance on traditional knowledge of ecology. This produced a new respect for indigenous knowledge and skills, and modified the First World's constant desire to convince other cultures that 'we are right'. It transpired that people in other cultures had complex classification systems, not only for the animal kingdom, but also for plants. There are criteria that determine the edibility of plants, tubers, bulbs, leaves, shoots, fruits and flowers.

As Lévi-Strauss (1962: 128) has indicated, plants and animals are for thinking and not just for eating: a vague statement meaning that every culture artificially and intellectually divides up the plant and animal kingdoms according to criteria that have little to do with actual edibility. A *cuisine* is thus like a 'language' 'conveying symbols which go far beyond itself' (De Garine 1971: 46-51). The codes of that 'language' concern not just the dishes served, but also the collection and preparation of food, which is often subject to strict rules, and which excludes some things as being taboo. This is why Kala-Lobe (1976: 196) quite correctly states that anyone unwilling to understand this 'language' lacks respect not just for the 'culinary identity' of a society, but also for its cultural identity.

It is possible for some parts of a plant to be edible while other parts are not, as is the case with plants in the nightshade family. This does not mean, however, that the poisonous parts do not find other uses, such as in the preparation of homeopathic medicine. It is particularly in this area that rural populations have built up empirical knowledge -*science du concret* - of which North Atlantic engineers, scientists and agricultural extension officers are unaware and often overlook in their aid programmes and extension activities. This local medical knowledge is often passed on from one generation of 'experts' to another. Whereas these local practitioners were once known as 'medicinemen', they were later called 'barefoot doctors' or more precisely 'herbalists'.

> "Throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America traditional health care systems, some more, some less formalized, continue to be widely supported. They are used not only by the many for whom access to the modern system is difficult or impossible, but also by urban (and often well educated) people who move freely between modern and traditional practitioners" (De Kadt 1983: 10-12).

Thus, according to Van Dijk (1981: 31), traditional medicine should be understood as everything a people does on its own initiative and under its own responsibility, on the basis of oral or written knowledge, in order to explain and/or cure diseases or injuries without calling in assistance from 'official' medical science.

In 1976 the World Health Organisation (WHO) appointed a study group to explore the

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role that might be played by traditional medicine in improving health in developing countries. This resulted in the same year in a major international conference in Alma Ata (USSR), which was devoted primarily to the subject. The WHO did not exclude the local healers from consideration either. According to the WHO, traditional healers are persons recognised by the community in which they live as being competent to protect health by using vegetable, animal and mineral substances. They also use methods based on the social, cultural and religious background of the people, and on the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs that are prevalent in the community regarding physical, mental and social well-being, as well as the causes of disease and disability. Traditional healers include local midwives or other traditional birth attendants, herbalists, and also diviners and spiritualists who play the role of intermediary between man and the supernatural. Also to be included in this category are barbers (as in Egypt), and beautician-tooth filers (as in Zambia), both of whom also perform minor surgery.

WHO's initiatives were supported by developments in health care, such as had been taking place on a national scale in China since 1949. China used local healers in its health care campaigns, and the expression 'barefoot doctor' quickly took hold. In the young People's Republic of China two historic moments can be indentified in which the government altered its health care policy. These were in the mid-1950s, and again at the beginning of the 1960s, somewhere between the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward.

Despite contemporary western ideas about medical science, Chinese people in rural areas with few medical facilities continued to call upon local healers, who could offer at least some medical help. In traditional China during the Manchu dynasty, traditional medicine took a metaphysical and holistic view of the person, and treatments such as acupuncture, herbal medicine and massage were used to balance internal body forces. At a National Health Congress which took place as early as 1950, the importance of these traditional healers was acknowledged (according to Garfield 1981: 76).

Once agrarian reforms began in the 1960s, however, the basic rural health services could not be left behind. The government was confronted with the cultural gap between physicians with western training, and the traditional medical practitioners. When intellectuals were forced to trade places with labourers, physicians with western training had to work both in rural areasand in the city with 'barefoot' colleagues.

According to Kruse (1978: 14), attempts were made in some developing countries to solve problems peculiar to those countries. Since 1972 Burma has had a School of Indigenous Medicine, while in India in 1978 the Academy of Ayurwedic Medicine began its work of training traditional healers through apprenticeships. In Mandar, also in India, the Holy Family Hospital experimented with training barefoot doctors as frontline workers because, according to Alphonso (1979: 43), they were better able to bridge the gap between the healer and the healed, something which the professional staff of the small hospital could find little time to do.

Bichmann (1984: 10) claims that in the traditional world view, childbirth does not belong to the sphere of disease and medicine. In the case of complications in childbirth, however, surgical assistance is often necessary. This fact has led a great many countries throughout the world to initiate training programmes and supervision for traditional midwives in order to teach them hygiene, prenatal care and the care of newborn babies. In view of the fact that, according to Keehn (1981: 12), two-thirds of all the babies born in the world are still delivered by traditional midwives - *dayas, dukuns, hakimas, jibbas, and madrones* - it makes sense that the Colombian Ministry of Health, for example, has identified the *madrones* 'in both rural communities and urban slums, as a 'useful community resource' who should receive training in order to offer greater service to the population' (Aller Atúcha 1979: 22).

Since the 1940s, Egypt's Ministry of Health has also trained *dayas*, as well as village 'health barbers' in its family planning campaigns. In contrast to the *hakima* (midwife), who is trained in the formal health system, the traditional *daya* comes to the house only when

birth has actually begun. She then stays until the child is seven days old. By that time the mother is out of immediate danger, breast feeding is established and, according to Keehn (1981: 13), the important Islamic ceremony of the seventh day *(sebou)* has also taken place.

Given their traditional role within the community - in which they watched over both mother and child, gave advice about diet and cultural taboos, assisted at ceremonies accompanying the first menstruation and *sunna* (female circumcision), helped to confirm virginity prior to marriage, etc. - some traditional midwives were even hired as assistants in maternal and child health clinics. This led to the creation of the intensive training programme for young nurse-midwives *(hakima)* offered by the local primary health care centres.

2.6. Complementary though antagonistic views on communication

By the end of the sixties, development agencies in developing countries had already learned that they should not underestimate the local knowledge of rural people. Gradually they learned that it was also possible to approach the farmer through his own local experts, media and institutions. Studies were carried out in India on the effectiveness of introducing innovative messages through the traditional channels so richly represented in the culture of the community. In the field of health care, the Rural Health Training Centre (Najafgargh in Delhi, India) examined the possibilities of using indigenous channels in order to motivate the rural population to take part in family planning and social welfare programmes. They investigated among other things the possibility of using the *baithak*, or men's lodge, as a point of entry. According to Bhandari (1972: 56) it is in the *baithak* that men gather to discuss matters of importance.

Another study by the same Indian organization concerned the use of *munadi* and *chowkidar* to disseminate throughout rural villages information on subjects related to health. According to Verghese (1977: 33), *munadi* is a traditional way of making announcements in rural India: information followed by drum-beating. This is done by the village *chowkidar* (watchman), who addresses the villagers publicly.

During the mid-seventies, when the national health-care and low-cost housing projects proved not to be working as had been expected, and when small-scale projects became more and more important in developmental work, the traditional doctor or the traditional architect were rediscovered as 'barefoot doctor' or 'barefoot architect'[8] in the respective sectors of development. Local female singers in Southeast Asia appeared to be quite capable of incorporating messages concerning birth regulation within their 'tearjerkers' about 'impossible love-affairs'. Comics and photo-novels in the same melodramatic genre were used in health-care projects in Latin America.

Thus, one of the first fields in which traditional barriers were removed for the introduction of modernization processes was that of family planning. Southeast Asia was the operating ground; innovation theories generally served as academic back-up, and government statistics on overpopulation expressed the need. Early in the 1970s, experiments were undertaken in Indonesia on the spreading of ideas concerning birth control with the aid of traditional midwives and nurses.

Condoms were distributed through the *dukun*, the traditional herbs specialist; family planning was advertised through the traditional though popular *wayang* puppet play. In 1972, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) in London held a congress of experts on the integrated use of popular media and mass media in communication programmes concerning birth control. In 1974 a similar conference was held in New Delhi. Through Tevia Abrams (1978), the United Nation Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) stressed the need for greater attention to the use of popular media in the service of birth control.

Thus, when in the context of development cooperation, enthusiasm for the use of the mass media waned, and development experts admitted that their expectations had been too

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high, it was only natural to turn to a veritable 'renaissance of the folk media' (Lent 1980). Using theatrical forms that proved to be 'popular' among the local people, fitted in with new ideas about two-way communication and the philosophy of approaching them by their own channels of communication to get 'innovative' messages across.

According to Beltran (1972: 22) communication is usually intended to mean the process of transmitting modes of thought, feeling and action of one or more persons to some other person(s). Also, it is still understood that this 'transfer' is a distinct attempt, by the transmitting person to persuade the receiving person(s) to change his or her thoughts, behaviour or actions. This is clearly shown in the case of propaganda by which, following Fauconnier (1973: 61), we understand a form of mass communication in which the communicator (the propagandist) consciously intends to influence the receiver's opinions, attitudes or behaviour, exclusively or primarily by means of communication techniques directed towards the will.

This definition assumes that there exists an active transmitter who influences the behaviour of a passive receiver through a persuasive 'monologue'. It therefore suggests a vertical, asymmetrical and unequal relationship in which the transmitter is inclined to dominate the behaviour of the receiver. According to McQuail (1975: 33), this situation

> "(...) is familiar as the model of the intentional transfer of information as defined by the sender, but without the positive commitment of the receiver to this definition of the situation. The case of the advertiser and his "target" audience or the propagandist and his public are examples, as are some institutionally defined learning situations where the pupil is uninterested and lacking motivation."

This view on communication is developed by countries which are 'advanced' both in the area of economic and technological development. It is, as Beltran stated, sometimes sad to see this view uncritically adopted by people from the technologically 'less advanced' countries.

Communication can also be defined as a social interaction process based on systems of symbols, through which people exchange affective and cognitive experiences with one another in a 'dialogue', which has a reciprocal influence on the behaviour of both parties concerned. This alternative view on communication offers certain advantages. First of all, it presumes a horizontal, symmetrical and equal relationship between transmitter and receiver, based on a dialogue. It implies a fair chance for mutual influence, and it does not carry the tendency to persuade as its object of primary importance (Epskamp 1982: 22).

The classical model implicitly shows that the purpose of communication is foremost to manipulate or persuade the receiver (see: Fig. 5). If we wish to get away from the idea of manipulation, we need a different model.

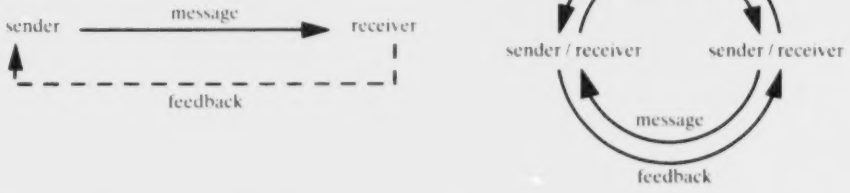

Fig. 5 Two Models of Communication
(Source: Balcomb 1975)

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What might be more appropriate is a circular diagram (see: Fig. 5), in which the parties to the 'communication contract', as it is sometimes called, function dually as senders and receivers. Supporters of the first mentioned classical view of communication generally also work with a materialistic model of development, i.e. the process of a country's increasing economic growth and material progress. For those who hold this view, mass media play an important role in the development of a country. For those who have a more democratic concept of communication and a more humanistic outlook on development, mass media often present a threat to society.

In the North Atlantic culture, technically advanced media have become an inseparable part of education. Since they had proved their efficiency, adequacy and effectiveness in our world, they tended to be prescribed to Third World countries by international experts without much consideration for the local context. Although the vogue for educational planning over the last forty years had been concentrated on the formal education system, from the 1970s onwards it could no longer be denied by educationalists that quite autonomous and genuine educational and cultural developments had been emerging from local levels of society, especially in the field of non-formal education.

In the 1970s and 1980s media specialists and designers of learning materials in the field of non-formal education started to speak in terms of 'popular communication' by which they referred to the 'democratization of communication' and which according to Freire (1976: 41) is only made possible after people have been made literate. Another term used by media specialists was 'development oriented' communication, in which the two-way flow of information was intended as a prerequisite for the appropriate communication model of the dialogue. However, mass media have a built-in one-way bias, which is difficult to counter. Because the classical communication models depended on the mass media, the message line in these models was always much stronger than the feedback loop.

This two-way communication in the context of large scale development projects is a difficult matter. Nevertheless it is essential to open two-way channels in development work, because if 'dialogue' does not underlie development co-operation at any level it will be quite difficult to stimulate popular participation at a grass roots level. Secondly, opening up two-way channels in development work will prevent isolation of the people at the top of the development pyramid, and finally have both the people at the base and the people at the top learning from each other.

2.7. Final remarks

Views on the problematic nature of development, as well as on development co-operation, have revealed considerable changes in accents and priorities during the past forty years. In the late fifties and early sixties, people still fervently believed in the build-up of the economic infrastructure as the main element in the fight against poverty. The North Atlantic world provided the developing countries with the required technical know-how. Education was seen as a prerequisite for starting up modernisation processes and for the supply of skilled labour for the growing labour market. In the period shortly afterwards, the funds for development co-operation grew considerably and more elaborate plans for development policy, as well as various technical aid programmes, came into being. This optimistic view could not fail to have its repercussion, as became evident in the late 60s. The expected rapid economic growth failed to materialize. The fight against poverty remained a fight against symptoms. It was generally accepted that this unilateral model for development caused many negative side-effects which overshot the development objectives.

In the information that accompanies their aid or development activities, all development organizations, whether supra-governmental, governmental or non-governmental, can be seen to have made the explicit decision to influence their *clientèle* and to convince them of their

own point of view. This is apparent not only in their stated objectives, but also in their project proposals. The only thing that varies is the particular perspective from which they proceed. This difference is reflected both in the amount of respect such an organization exhibits for the socio-cultural identity of the people they are trying to help, and in the degree of participation in both decision-making and implementation that they are willing to allow the target group.

People in the Third World have, for example, their own ideas about food and nutrition, which may be contrary to the views of the development experts, who regarded these feeding habits as unhealthy, unhygienic, and even unsavoury, without realizing that these habits and views are an integral part of the culture of the people who they were trying to induce to other (read: better) feeding habits. With this in mind, it is not strange that a number of UN organizations, among which particularly the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) can be mentioned, realized that only research into these indigenous habits could help the developmental worker to indicate cultural blockades in the field of food and nutrition.

Some examples of these research trends in development work in the last ten years have already been mentioned in this chapter. Such trends concern the growing appreciation during the 1970s of small-scale and local projects, participatory education and research, the use of appropriate and intermediate technology, the interest in indigenous knowledge systems and the promotion of the micro-media. All these points seem to be formulated out of one central principle: small is beautiful. From that point of view all these trends initiated in the second half of the seventies can be considered as a reaction to the mass development campaigns that were part and parcel of the preceding sixties and fifties.

The indigenisation of development work complemented the ideas that dominated development work in the seventies. Making use of local practitioners also fitted in with small-scale projects that were set up together with the local population. In this way one made use of the local infrastructure already present, one interfered as little as possible in the local culture, and one could thus be more or less certain that with the departure of the project staff, the project itself would not disappear immediately.

During the seventies this principle of indigenizing development was of importance in finding new small-scale educative media in adult education. Experiments with the use of 'folk' and 'popular' media, including the rich variety of local performing arts, were elaborated upon. About these experiments and their results a host of literature has been published. This evolved in an increasing babel of tongues on the concept of 'popular theatre'.

The following three chapters will give the reader more insight into the various options from which 'popular theatre' has been studied, namely from a social scientist's, an educationalist's and a performing artist's point of view. The three chapters have a certain amount of overlap in information. Yet, this distinction has been maintained to introduce the reader to three different perspectives with varying point of emphasis in the development of the notion of popular theatre.

Part One:

The Historical Antecedents of 'Theatre for Development'

III.
Popular Theatre from a Social Scientific Point of View

In Third World countries the practice of a national culture receives powerful government promotion. But 'national culture' is an awkward concept for countries where the boundaries have apparently been drawn at random in colonial times, a practice which led to cultural diversity. In this sense, national frontiers do not at all agree with cultural borders. In these countries, therefore, it is not easy to set up a developmental, educational or cultural policy in which all ethnical groups and cultures meet. Either the policy becomes a common denominator or a sort of divide and rule policy in which a fragile balance of unity in diversity is sought after. It is obvious that in this process, the countries themselves try to find an autonomous point of view which, politically speaking, does not tolerate any foreign intervention. But foreign influence is unavoidable, if only through international trade relations and mass media.

What is concocted and propagated at a national level will not necessarily become popular locally. What the authorities like to propagate most as a national culture often does not agree with forms of culture which are popular at the (rural and urban) roots of society.

At the level of national policy making, Shafer (1975: 24) distinguished four 'cultural contexts' in which the concept of culture might be contained; the artistic, the social, the anthropological and the ideological. In each of these contexts the concept of 'culture' meets with a certain view: in the artistic context culture meets with its most limited meaning. Here, culture is synonymous with art. Sometimes it also includes industrial art, the handicrafts, and the skilled labour of the 'artisans'. But usually this is not the case. On the somewhat wider level of the social context of culture, in which society is understood as a multi-cultural society, it also includes leisure activities and sports. Most non-socialist countries, in their policy plans, use this social context of culture on the basis of a conscious and strict distinction between work and leisure, between economic and social time. Policy reports on leisure activities are primarily concerned with the production and consumption of art, handicrafts, sports, media and leisure activities.

In such countries, the administrative body primarily concerned with quality control of the artistic context of culture is generally their 'Arts Council'. Most of these Councils function as independent, or semi-independent bodies, although they are directly responsible to some governmental department, such as a Ministry of Education, Culture, Recreation, or Social Services.

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Fig. 6 Cultural Contexts according to Schafer
(Source: Schafer 1975)

In most developing countries, culture is regarded more in an anthropological perspective. In the anthropological context of culture, traditions, values, institutions and even artifacts become part of the concept of culture.

Finally we can also speak of an ideological context of culture in which the concept of culture even includes sentiments, ideas, world views and action. Within this context culture is identified with a 'way of life' or 'life-style', in the individual as well as in the collective meaning of the word. Given these anthropological and ideological views on culture, it is hardly surprising what in most developing countries, including socialist-oriented countries, views onculture are dictated by a Cultural Planning Bureau, or a Ministry of Culture.

3.1. Going 'popular' with culture: development and cultural identity

According to Walter Benjamin (1985: 2-12), the disappearance of the craftsmanship of making artifacts and works of art as unique specimens is directly connected with the coming of techniques of reproduction in industrial and post-industrial societies. In highly industrialized countries it is entertainment with which the culture industry monopolizes the leisure hours of the people. Phenomena such as 'stars' and 'bestsellers' form part of the business. Because money is the drive of the culture industry, which therefore makes use of what Henry (1967: 148) calls the 'pecuniary popular psychology', it is prepared to meet the needs of its customers as closely as possible.

The distinction between learning and being entertained is a typically North Atlantic functional distinction. It indicates the disconnection of socio-cultural sectors. The organization of both formal education and of the mass media exemplifies this. They are pyramidally organized and define from the top the needs to educatees and information receivers. From above, the message is adapted to the living situation or the 'dreamworld' of consumers at the basis of society. In developing countries, too, this approach is often used as a blueprint for the organization of education and media. Education as well as media, both aiming at the transfer of information, are still regarded as magic charms for national development, the concept of development being seen not from a Buddhistic[1], Hinduistic or Islamic perspective but from the Calvinist angle of economic growth and technological advancement.

Third World countries realized this and started to fight alien ideological and socio-cultural dominance imposed by the media. This socio-cultural domination by the North Atlantic countries was explicitly brought forward in 1973 at the fourth conference of the non-aligned countries in Algeria. In 1975 Demas stated that the electronic mass media, especially television, had a destructive influence in Latin America and the Caribbean area on the national cultural identity and the autonomous and independent socio-economic development. According to Demas (cf. Beltran 1980: 79) this was due not only to the advertisements of imported goods, but also to the actual contents of the programmes shown. To him, both advertisements and programmes are creating a need for a way of life predominant in affluent societies.

The fervent discussions on this subject in the 1970s were characterized by frequent use

of such terms as 'cultural imperialism', 'cultural colonization' or 'cultural invasion', as for example Freire (1968: 150) calls it. The dismantling of vertical, polarised power relations would seem to be a first prerequisite for independent and authentic development. Although direct colonialism has all but disappeared, the North Atlantic countries have continued to dominate the rest of the world ideologically and socio-culturally by means of the media. It is for this reason that Cabral (1980: 138-154) used the term 'cultural imperialism', to denote this international continuation of socio-economic domination, which prevents a genuine national economic development and the growth of an authentic national culture.

This was not surprising in view of the growing recognition of large numbers of 'cultureless poor' (Frank 1982: 18) who found themselves in between their rural traditions and the overpowering urban culture. Such people are somewhat in between their socio-cultural roots in the countryside and 'modern' city life. They are exposed to a continuing stream of 'alien' information, through education and the media. The elements of 'popular culture' which reach them through their portable radio, film and TV are of an unfamiliar and cosmopolitan kind. It is this kind of 'popular culture' that becomes programme matter, and while claiming to support the national cultural identity, it actually leads to 'cultural oppression' as Cabral (1980: 143) puts it.

An essential question in this context is on whose behalf we speak of development and cultural identity[2]. As Van Nieuwenhuijze (1982: 19) has pointed out, the interests of the North Atlantic countries differ widely from those of the Third World, as the perspectives on whose basis ideas are launched are not the same. Ever since colonial rule, Third World countries have been made to adopt the North Atlantic world view and lifestyle with respect to such concepts as 'tradition' and 'modernization'. The idea is obvious: the introduction of technology into agriculture and industry and the improvement of education are prerequisites for economic development which will lead to a 'welfare state'. According to Abdul Aziz Belal (1979) the 'development paradigm' was based on this, and in western eyes, countries that failed to correspond to it belonged to the Third World. Development projects continued to demand modernization according to a North Atlantic model.

To put a stop to this 'culture import' was obviously far from easy. Socio-political and technical constraints had so determined the relationship of dependence between North and South, even in this respect, that the flow of information could be reduced only with the greatest effort. It was recognized that the majority of the Third World population, i.e. the deprived people living in rural areas, and the traditional ethnic cultures offered very little resistance to the one-way flow of information.

At the same time, multilateral UN organizations studied the cultural dimension of development co-operation. At the intergovernmental conference on cultural policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Bogota (Colombia) in 1978, UNESCO's former director-general, Amadou M'Bow observed that cultural development ought to form an integral part of the general developing process, and that cultural identity cannot be promoted unless some sort of cultural democracy is introduced into all media. This principle was again voiced in 1982 at the World Conference of Ministers of Culture, organized in Mexico by UNESCO, wherethe West European countries expressed their intention to give more attention to the cultural dimension of development (Jung 1982: 19) and the right to develop an endogenous cultural identity.

Now the difficulty with the notion of 'identity' is its dialectic nature. This is because of the fact that 'identity (...) both identifies and distinguishes; for an individual (or a human group) is identical with other individuals (or groups) only if distinct from yet other ones' (Cabral 1977:18). Thus, conceptually the notion of identity gets its meaning from the opposition with the notion of alienation. We speak of alienation if a person cannot find or achieve his own identity. According to Lemaire (1976: 394-395) alienation[3] then expresses the con-

tradiction that the members of a society experience between their cultural ideals and their cultural reality. But everyday reality shows a more complicated picture:

> "In most multi-cultural countries however, not only is culture changing, but it is not unusual for people to manage a variety of cultures, i.e. to change cultures performing different roles in each, or if you like to have several cultural identities existing without conflict and often unconsciously existing. An overseas Chinese in Trinidad and Tobago may burn incense on graves, belong to a Chinese club or association and in these assume a Chinese identity. He then takes part in the Afro-Caribbean Carnival, assuming another identity. He speaks English having lost his native Cantonese or Hakka, and he may be part of the Chamber of Commerce linked with business inside and outside the country and patterned on another culture. In each situation he is culturally quite different" (Jones 1978: 9).

Thus, the individual and society both derive their identity or identify themselves by way of the other, and the others, 'in a process that covers the lifestory of the individual as well as of the species' (Lemaire 1976: 391).

The notion of cultural identity, therefore, owespart of its meaning to the context in which it was invented. Historically speaking, that context is the one of North Atlantic bourgeois society, the priorities of which still are privatization of the economy, and the individual's freedom from ties such as community, guild and religion. The current context is that of a society, or rather, a state which, as far as social structure is concerned, has opted for class distinctions inherent in its structure. For that reason, the notion of cultural identity is used in order to demonstrate respect for any society with another structure, which cannot be immediately fitted into a class society.

The implications for ourselves, according to Lemaire (1976: 393), are the embarrassing realization of being confronted with ourselves, and being reduced to merely possessing and labouring individuals, leading fragmented social existences, partly due to the hyper-developed distribution of labour and total rationalization. The question is not so much concerned with the preservation or revival of a cultural identity, as with the context in which it is experienced, used and dealt with.

3.2. Popular culture in relation to the various constructed types of culture

In English two terms are used to indicate culture that is popular among large sections of the population: 'folk' and 'popular' culture. Popular culture is a concept which over the last four decades, has received considerable attention by sociologists and media specialists investigating cultural pluralism in the North Atlantic World. Folk culture was the object of many studies during the 1950s, especially by anthropologists investigating similar cultural pluralistic tendencies in Third World nations. As Foster (1953: 159) indicated, the anthropologists extended their operational field during that time. They no longer limited themselves exclusively to isolated 'primitive', native or tribal communities, but more and more paid attention to rural communities that had already encountered processes of change.

> "Folk culture is a term about which there seems perhaps to be more general agreement than others in the field. It is culture produced and consumed by members of a group that reinforces the values of that group: that is, part of a 'web of significance' for its creators and consumers. The product (song, myth, dance, saga) has no individual author, and is presented in oral, aural or visual form. Generally it refers to the culture of pre-industrial peoples and the traditions preserved by enclaves of rural immigrants to the industrial world" (Lewis 1979: 41).

Among anthropologists, Redfield (1947:) was one of the first who, in his ethnografic descriptions of Mexico and in his later theories, explicitly used the terms 'folk society' and 'folk culture' to describe the culture of villages which knew neither a purely traditional or indigenous culture, nor a fully modernized culture. Mixtures such as the mingling of the Roman Catholic faith with the indigenous belief system in Latin American cultures could be recognized in cultural customs and persuasions. These were communities which, through their contact with the industrial and urban centres, had begun a process of change, which also influenced their 'folk' arts. 'Folk art might then be defined as

> "a manual activity, in which by means of a traditional technology, an element of beauty or of artistic expression and of traditional character is added to a useful or decorative object: such objects should have a useful, ceremonial, sumptuous or simply esthetic finality immediately linked to the *modus vivendi* and reflect in some manner the social essence in which they were produced and for which they were destined" (Penaloza 1979: 12).

Redfield's theories, inspired by older sociological theories such as Durkheim's ideas concerning organic and mechanic solidarity and those of Tönnies about *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, reveal how much he connected folk cultures with the shifting cultural patterns as they existed in the country and in the city. Redfield based his notions on ideal types which were far removed from reality and for which he has frequently been criticized. One of the criticisms, for instance, referred to the fact that in his analyses he had completely left out of consideration the folk culture of rural dwellers newly settled in the city.

Meanwhile, among anthropologists the term 'folk culture' had started to lead a life of its own and had been adopted, on the one hand, by 'folklorists' describing folk dance, traditional costume, etc. and on the other hand by 'ethno'-scholars exploring indigenous healing practices and the local knowledge of herbs, etc. Popularly as well as in academic circles, therefore, the notion 'folklore' is still associated with social events and meetings, highlighted by song and dances referring to a cultural past. Folklore very easily has the connotation of a nostalgic taste.

To 'folklorists' in particular, the term 'folk'-culture gained an ever-stronger overtone referring to the 'remains' of a 'dead' culture which, paradoxically, have been kept alive by the authorities due to a sense of national chauvinism or by way of a tourist attraction. 'The term popular culture (and mass culture) has seldom been included in folk material, having come to refer nearly always to cultural products of an industrial order' (Lewis 1979: 41). Popular culture, says Bigsby (1973: 16), somehow seeks a combination of art and 'high' technology.

In the fifties and sixties, everything which appealed to man in the industrial world on a mass basis and which entertained him was called 'popular art', 'popular culture' or 'mass culture'. These concepts originated in the United States in the fifties and refer rather to the medium involved than to the cultural products themselves. According to Lowenthal, (1957: 55-57) 'popular culture' refers to standardized culture which, from the point of view of the entertainment industry, meets the needs of the leisure activities of broad layers of the population in a commercial and consumptive way.

Popular culture clearly differs from traditional and elitist culture, says Bogart (1957). As early as the 1950's he pointed out the necessary distinction between 'folk culture' of the non-industrialized communities and 'popular culture' of the industrialized societies. 'Popular culture' is characterized by a large and quite heterogeneous audience, by the lack of a direct and critical contact between designer, artist and audience, by the use of simple, uncontroversial themes and human qualities with which an audience can easily identify.

According to Thompson (1973: 9), popular culture in an industrialized society is that

culture which we are systematically provided with on a large scale by the media, by those who write, design and compose with large numbers of consumers in mind. Hence, popular culture is technologically mediated culture, whose formula is spread all over the world through press, radio, film, television and advertising. In the North Atlantic world this concept refers to the pastimes of the masses: popular entertainment. So it is, on the one hand, concerned with forms of expression belonging to groups of people, but on the other hand with the consuming habits of the masses with respect to products of a growing entertainment industry, 'manufactured wholesale for the market' (MacDonald 1957: 59).

This implies that graffity, break dance, body building, the behaviour of football supporters, comic books, wooden shoe dancing, barrel organs, penny novels and science fiction form a part of a popular culture that is different from 'high' culture or elite culture, often spelt with a capital C.

> "Referred to also as 'high culture', elite culture is described (...) as that produced by known artists within a consciously aesthetic context and by an accepted set of rules, its attainment (or failure) judged by reference to a normative body of recognized classics. Elite culture is usually described as subjective, individualistic, technically and thematically complex, and its aim is the discovery of new ways of recording and interpreting experience. (...) Elite culture has also been defined in a very different manner - as that culture consumed by the elite socio-economic class of a society. (...) This sort of class-based definition does not concern itself with defining the content of the cultural artifacts and how this content differs or is similar to that of other subcultures, nor why such cultural forms have significance for the elite, or the bourgeoisie, operationally defining what they consume as elite culture" (Lewis 1979: 41).[4]

It may be concluded from the above that 'popular culture' implies a class distinction. 'What people generally have in mind when they allude to 'popular' taste is that which somehow has mass appeal' (Lang 1957: 379). Anyway, in the eyes of the wealthy and the sophisticated, popular culture implies 'bad taste'.

It is for this reason that the term has an unfavourable overtone, says Fabian (1978: 315). Nevertheless, he considers that the term has connotations which justify its use. Firstly, in a mondial sense, the term popular culture, just as its twin folk culture, refers to present-day forms of expression among large populations who do not belong to the modern elite or to the traditional ethnic, tribal, native or indigenous culture. Secondly, it demonstrates under what historical circumstances (the rise of mass communication, mass production and consumption) the concept is characterized. Thirdly, the concept hovers somewhere between Culture and folklore, both elitist concepts imposed by the North Atlantic world. Lastly, the term refers to cultural processes that are uncontrolled by the cultural establishment and - in this context - is more appropriate than folk culture in describing and explaining the history of cultural oppression.

Both terms, 'folk' and 'popular' culture are generally used to indicate those forms of cultural expression in Third World countries which do not form part of an elitist or of a native culture or belong to folklore. Folk and popular culture reside among broad layers of the population, demarcated by the geographic distinction between rural and urban areas. Thus, popular culture is closely connected with the rise of industry and urban development, while folk culture is associated with agriculture and rural development. Both cultural fields value their own vast set of conventions and traditions. However, it is generally understood that popular culture is simultaneously more open to a particular sort of social change, namely modernization.

According to Van Duin (1981: 4-8) we ought to realize that popular culture carries both a conservative (regressive) and an advanced (progressive) orientation. Popular culture thus

indicates culture which in a lively way appeals to broad layers of the (urban) population, and is ready to change its conventions on an impulse either from within or from outside. However, considering the contagion of the term folk culture with folklore, with the countryside, with 'closed' (rural) communities, and with obstinate conventional remainders from a slowly dying past, does not imply that particular forms of folk/popular culture are known which have arisen from a historical cultural development of their own, without intervention from outside, an endogenous development as Lê Thành Khôi (1984: 11) calls it.

This brings us to the following diagram, in which mass, popular, elite and folk culture are related to one another as constructed types of culture. The triangle in the right-hand bottom corner, which relates folk culture to elite and popular culture is particularly applicable to societies having a pre-industrial mode of production. The triangle in the left-hand top corner, which relates mass culture to elite and popular culture, is particularly applicable to societies where there is an industrial or post-industrial mode of production.[5]

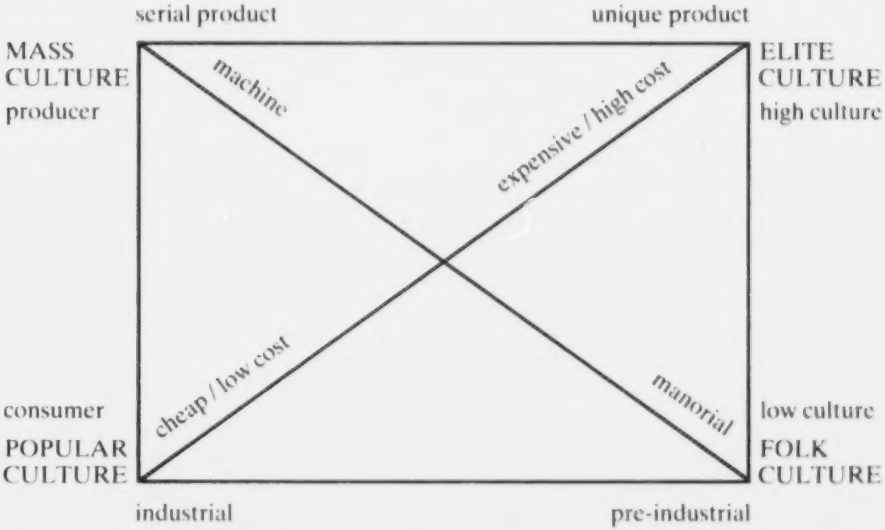

Fig. 7 Indicators for the Definition of Four Cultural Concepts

At this point it must be remembered that in industrial societies, it is generally supposed that mass and popular culture overlap a great deal. Although I think that both these forms of culture are as alike as both sides of the same piece of paper, they should be distinguished because I assume that, if we refer to a product of culture as mass culture as for example TV, we approach that product from the point of view of the producer. It is a product designed **for** the consumer, 'an article for mass consumption' (MacDonald 1957: 59). When using the term popular culture as for example grafitti or wall newspapers, we speak from the point of view of the consumer, and on products of culture designed **by** the consumer.

3.3. The identity of popular theatre at a local and national level

What is propagated by a government as a national cultural heritage does not necessarily have to be experienced as popular culture at the base of society. But the contrary is also sometimes

the case. In young, politically autonomous and independent states where recently a social change in politics and ideology has taken place, the government may seek a clear set of characteristics of the cultural image (national identity) at home and abroad on the one hand, whileon the other hand the population may feel the need to determine its cultural identity or identities in this new situation. I need only refer to those states where, after a social revolution, there was a sudden outburst of theatremania. Such places are the U.S.S.R., Mexico, Indonesia, Cuba, Nicaragua and Iran.

In countries with a strong, authentic and endogenously determined cultural identity, or in countries with a strong and homogeneous religious tradition, like Iran, the gap between the population's cultural identity and the national identity propagated by the government, is obviously not very great.

> "The Iranian revolution of 1978-79 grew naturally from native soil. The impetus for revolution has been traced to many factors, such as political and economic conditions, foreign interests, and the challenge to traditional social structure. Cumulatively, these factors contributed to what could be best described as a conflict between the official culture of the government and ruling elites, which represented and promoted Western influence, and the traditional culture of the masses rooted in Iranian national and religious traditions" (Mowlana 1979: 107).

In the pre-revolutionary period, the revolutionaries were obliged to seek recourse to the small media, such as cassettes, xerox, tapes and telephone, to escape the control of the regime of the Shah. The mass media - the press, magazines, radio and TV - were dominated by Western products and the politics of the Shah. Therefore, the revolutionaries and people in general relied on trad itional channels of communication, primarily public meetings or other meeting places from which their messages could be spread and their resistance organized. Such places were the *bazaar,* the mosque *(masjid),* etc.

Despite the fact that in pre-revolutionary Iranthe majority of the population was Islamic, theatre was made and watched. The Islam worldview does not accept any iconic representation of man or god, including representations on stage. Therefore, it is not surprising that after the Iranian revolution (1978-79) the appreciation of some theatre forms changed.

Besides television drama, which was accessible only to a limited audience, there were other forms of theatre. In rural areas, but also in urban working-class quarters, solo performers put on puppet shows, or recitation. One such form which combined narration and enactment was the comic and burlesque *Taglid.* These skits not only commented on life within the community, but also commented on society and its rulers. Then there were two other forms called 'folk theatre' by Wardle (1971: 153); *ta'zieh,* which has its roots in religious history, and the *motreb ru-howzi,* which is comparable to West European *commedia dell'arte.* The latter form was put on by touring companies which performed at certain occasions in the villages, and improvised with stock characters, stock intermezzi and stock plot lines on situations from Iranian common life and treated in a low comedy style.

Besides that, a small elite was allowed to get acquainted with North Atlantic theatre in guest performances or during special festivals. The annual festival organized by the Shah in Shiraz is a good example.[6] A very small royal elite was allowed to attend the declamation of the royal epic, the *Shah Nameh,* from which passages were sung or recited to the accompaniment of drums during the pursuit of the royal sport of *zoorkhaneh.* Finally, there were the performing arts of the cultural minorities, such as the Kurds.

If we classify these pre-revolutionary forms of theatre, then puppet shows, declamatory art, *Taglid, Ta'zieh* and *Motreb ru-howzi* are all folk theatre, aslong as they are not presented by paid professionals. As soon as one can speak of touring groups or paid specialized people, one could speak of popular theatre. In any case, the guest performances of the North Atlantic

companies and the declamation of the royal epic, the *Shah Nameh*, are all part of elite theatre. The other two forms of theatre are difficult to place, namely the *Ta'zieh* and the theatre of the cultural minorities such as the Kurds. For convenience's sake we are inclined to place the latter form with folk theatre, as long as there is no question of paid professionals.

Tah'zieh presents a more difficult problem. *Tah'zieh* is performed by professionals in the urban areas as well as in the rural areas. As well as that, *Tah'zieh* is performed by amateurs all over Iran. During the administration of the Shah, therefore, there were both folk and popular versions of this form of theatre, both of which were accepted, but not really appreciated by those pursuing the west-orientated modernization process envisaged by the Shah. This distinction disappeared after the Iranian Revolution, and *Tah'zieh* became pre-eminently, the popular theatre of Iran, valued highly, by the people as well as by the religious elite.

One might expect that in post-revolution Iran, where Islam is observed strictly according to the *shi'ite* doctrine, any form of theatre would be out of the question. But *Ta'zieh* is not only accepted in Iran, but even promoted as the very tradition that not only underlines the cultural identity of the population, but also the national identity of the state. Today's regime regards *ta'zieh* as a genuine popular theatre form in rural as well as urban areas.

Why this exception? The answer to this question is more obvious than might be expected. In *ta'zieh*, which literally translated means 'mourning', and as a mourning ritual has in fact pre-Islamic origins, the story is told of the massacre of the caliph Hussain, the grandson of the prophet Mohammed, from whom the *shi'ite* Islam derives its *raison d'être*, and the Iranian Revolution its legitimacy. Through *ta'zieh*, Hussain emerged from history into legend: at once a saint, and a patriotic defender of the Iranian *shi'ite* faith against the country's *sunnite* neighbours. Dramatically, the offence of putting Hussain on stage is two fold: he presents a standing challenge to the rest of the Islam world, and is an impious infringement of the Muslim taboo forbidding the representation of sacred personages (Wardle 1971: 153).

Acknowledging the popularity of *ta'zieh* in every part of the *shi'ite* population and on every level of administration takes away not only the distinction between 'cultural identity' and 'national identity', but also the elaborate distinctions between popular, mass, folk and elite theatre in pre-revolutionary Iran. Under the new government, theatre mania has struck here too, albeit rather one-sidedly. *Ta'zieh* is watched and performed everywhere at all levels of the population; it enjoys a huge popularity; it is a genuine folk medium, and it is acknowledged by the elite as pre-eminently the Iranian theatre.

3.4. Cultural minorities: nation building versus identity seeking

But not everywhere in the world are the base and the top of society politically and culturally as undivided as suggested above. An example to the contrary is Papua New Guinea, which is part of the largest of the Pacific Islands, on the southwest rim of the Pacific, wedged between Indonesia and Australia. It is a parliamentary democracy of three million people and seven hundred language/culture groups. Some 85% of the people are subsistence farmers in rural areas.

This is a diversity and multiformity that is unprecedented even in African states. Nevertheless, this young state has one advantage, in that the population, primarily dependent on food gathering and subsistence farming, until recently never had the idea of belonging to a nation, or naming their performing arts 'theatre'. Terms such as 'economic development', 'national identity', or even 'theatre' have been used for a few decades, without these having any fixed meaning for the local population. In such a situation, the government more or less has an open mandate as regards determining the image of a national identity, and as regards the policy of a national theatre, whichmust, at the same time, be experienced as popular by the population.

When speaking about a national and popular theatre of Papua New Guinea, we usually

refer to the Raun Raun theatre based in Goroka in the Eastern Province, started in 1975 with a small grant from the National Cultural Council.

> "The Raun Raun theatre is an organic, popular theatre movement in Papua New Guinea, which attempts on the one hand, to transpose traditional cultural forms into contemporary theatre and on the other, to engage the widening concerns of contemporary rural society (...). In 1978, the first social program, sponsored by the Provincial Government of the Eastern Highlands, was conducted on the themes of malnutrition, diarrhoea, scabies and veneral disease. Subsequently, similar programs were undertaken on the effects of coffee cash cropping and family planning" (Murphy 1981: 4).

Neither the government nor the members of the Raun Raun theatre were opposed to the idea of using this national theatre troupe for purposes of national development. Like Papua New Guinea, most African nations have to deal with a strong indigenous or ethnic variety, which the culture policies in those countries need to take into account. This does not only hold for Africa, but to a degree for other countries all over the world. In the North Atlantic, as well as in the Third World, one can find ethnic groups which are characterized by strong cultural idiosyncrasies, but which are regarded by the government as cultural minorities, as for instance the Tiv in Nigeria, the Inuit in Canada, the Kurds in Iran and Russia and the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

During the first Indigenous People's Theatre celebration[7], in Toronto (Canada) in 1980, it was determined 'that indigenous people were those who perceived themselves to be the descendants of the original inhabitants of the area represented' (Van Hummelen 1981: 7), and in that sense, aboriginal, indigenous and native can be used indiscriminately. In the African context, but also in the Indian context, these cultures are also labelled tribal. In Europe these groups, usually formed after migration, are called ethnic groups. In any case, we are concerned with minorities which live as a cultural enclave within a nation or state, in which they have no political power and, culturally, are subject to great pressure from the conventions and attitudes belonging to the culture of the dominant groups of the population.

Examples of this are the aboriginal cultures in Australia[8], the Maoris in New Zealand, the Ainus in Japan, the Inuit (or Eskimos)[9] and other cultures in the Arctic, the Indian cultures all over America, the Tiv in Nigeria, and the Samén[10] or Laplanders in Northern Europe. Further, these are refugees, migrants and exiles who live in small cultural communities on foreign grounds. The aim of each of these groups is the preservation of their own identity, as regards socio-cultural behaviour as well as religion and art.

The indigenous theatre groups of today, organized like most current North Atlantic companies, are not undisturbed by the main developments in society. They accept a kind of social responsibility, or rather, social orientation, as regards their own people as part of a greater political whole. This becomes clear in their productions.

The Rama Young People's Theatre, for instance, an Indian Ojibway group (Canada) tries to bring Indians and non-Indians together and to utilize means of communication that have eluded many government agencies and programmes. The Atchemowin Society is a group consisting of Cree Indians (Canada) which wants to give Indians an opportunity to get acquainted with professional theatre, and to keep alive the cultural conventions by means of the performing arts. The Native Americans in the Arts are an Indian group in New York which aims to bring together talented young native performers for opportunities to further develop their skills and to work in productions that relate to native interests and culture.

Theatre of Identity (Colombia) is an initiative of the Fundación Colombiana de Investigaciones Folclóricas, an organization formed in 1969 to bring together the work of Colombian social scientists and artists in researching and promoting popular culture (Ackermann 1979: 56)[11]. The principal assumption of the Theatre of Identity was that all Colombian peoples

have a potential for creative and dramatic expression. Its objectives were: to elicit through direct contact with rural people the tales, myths, jokes and legends that form popular culture and are transmitted from generation to generation as oral tradition or embodied in celebrations and festivals; and to put together theatrical works based on material narrated by rural people so that the audience would reaffirm its identity by seeing their culture mirrored back to them from the stage (Haggerty 1979: 8).

The Indian theatre groups in Mexico which come under the auspices of the Dirección de Culturas Populares, the Dirección de Educación Indigena or the Instituto Nacional Indigenista, like Purépecha (Michoacan) and Nahua (Hidalgo), consisting of amateurs and teachers, are part of a government programme to promote theatre productions with a social and educational identity. The Guatemalan Indians who started Teatro Vivo[12], go one step further than that in their social views. They formed a political group appealing for changes in their society. They intimately tied their theatrical work to the needs of their people by showing social realities and ways to deal with them.

The Inuit group Tukat Teatret[13], presently based in Denmark, aims at educating Inuit actors who want to establish a native theatre centre in Greenland. It is their wish to stimulate better cultural attitudes among the people, and through theatre, to unite the old and the new cultures of their society. So, clearly the Inuit regard their culture as a living tradition, which must be preserved at all costs, and in the theatre too. The Irish group Siamsa Tire (National Folk Theatre of Ireland) is not so much militant as patriotic, and appeals, from that stance, to the sentiments of its audience in a totally different way. They are deeply concerned with the erosion of cultural values and the perceptible decline of inherited traditions. It is now the largest performing company in Ireland and its purpose is aimed at rousing the Irish to a pride in their heritage and restoring to them a sense of national identity.

3.5. Final remarks

In the post-industrial mode of production, a sophisticated electronic technology plays an important part. Automation in industry caused, on the one hand, a change in the hierarchy of the process of manual labour and, on the other hand, the consumer's ability to spend, at reasonable prices, part of his spare time on entertainment which was made accessible by electronics only.

> "If the final criteria for popular theatre is that it is theatre widely spread, a theatre which a large number of people make use of today, the answer is the television-theatre. Television-theatre is our modern folk theatre according to the criteria that it is watched by a wide range of people" (Hagnell 1977: 229).[14]

And this reasoning has brought us full circle, having started from a generalistic social scientist approach, which starts from a model of the various contexts of culture. Hence the descriptions of 'the people' and of popular theatre depend on the social context within which it develops.

In the North Atlantic world, popular culture refers to the products of the mass culture industry: songs, entertainment, dress, advertising, novelettes, home furnishing, etc. In other words, popular culture as conceived in the West was the culture aimed at the lower and middle class consumer by the mass media. It was the culture that broadly dictated to a large public the latest fashions and trends in being a 'modern' consumer. However, this was in no way the same culture that was autonomous for the lower classes of Western society:

> "Throughout history the elite have frowned on the culture of workers and peasants. (...) In Britain, music hall, bingo and brass bands are all considered unsophisticated and second rate. Country and western music is sneered at in the US for the same reason.

> The more people become involved in their own culture, the greater becomes their confidence to challenge the assumptions of the divided society. (...) Popular culture in the hands of the people is dangerous. So the elite fight to keep it under control. And the types of control vary from censorship and murder to derision and mass production of the sort of pap that keeps people off the streets" (Taylor 1981: 8).

Thus, for the elite the term 'popular' for a long time had quite derogatory connotations, according to White (1980: 3), varying from the culture supplied to broad layers of society, to the products of the mass culture industry.

The introduction of broadcasting and other mass media has standardised culture and has taken it to a global level. However, as Taylor (1981: 9) put it: 'As the globe shrinks so does its diversity.' Even if the broadcasts contain a fair amount of authentic local popular culture, the authenticity of its forms of expression is 'profaned' by dissociating the events from their cultural context, e.g. the festivals in which they were originally incorporated. Broadcast popular culture is homogenized and straitjacketed by the broadcasting style. Apart from the technological requirements and limitations of cameras, microphones, etc., every type of programme, whether news, magazines, sports or soap opera, has its own particular media format.

Kato (1976: 257) mentions the example of Japanese wrestling *(sumo)* which originally was part of a religious ritual performed to entertain the gods. Profanation started in the 19th century, when it became a public sport. When contests were first broadcast by radio at the end of the 1930s, thetime aspect of recording became apparent. Ritual time and programme time did not agree with each other. The wrestler, accustomed to a minimum of ten minutes' contemplation and concentration before the match, found himself limited to three minutes, because the programme had to end at 6.30 p.m. When *sumo* was broadcast on TV the wrestling ground - a ritual space traditionally surrounded by columns - also had to be altered because columns made it difficult for cameras to move about.

However, when one switches on the TV in a hotel room in developing countries, the amount of western mass culture that appears is overwhelming. It is not only the formats of pop-music programmes and series such as Dallas and Dynasty, but the over-all broadcasting formula, the structure and organization of newspapers and broadcasting companies. And these mass media have adopted their own types of messages, alien to the various cultural contexts in developing countries. This growing awareness that media speak their own 'language' and that their methods of production are dominated, economically and managerially speaking, by Europe, North America and Japan, from the early 1970s on wards, has given rise to aversion to this 'culture import' in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Pacific.

Although governments as well as basic nongovernmental organizations in developing countries have expressed their views on the right to maintain their own cultural identities, it cannot be denied that the people in these areas love to watch TV series, to listen to radio programmes, to read comic books and to look at glamorous adverts. So far, little is known about the popularity of culture in suburban areas. Do these people, by enjoying novelettes, reflect 'bad taste' or 'new culture'? Genres become blurred, traditional culture becomes popularized, as in Indonesian comic books in which the age-old heroes appear with the body-builder physiognomy of Conan or Batman. The story line and the characters are indigenous, but the medium and visual codes used are alien. Looking at it from this angle we can hardly speak of the 'cultureless poor', referringto those living at the fringe of urban areas, neither forming part of the metropolitan culture nor of the rural culture. I think we should take these endogenous developments of popular culture seriously.

IV.
Popular Theatre from an Educative Point of View

In the past decades, popular theatre has manifested itself in various parts of the world. The general breakthrough in Europe was made in the 1920s, when Reinhardt, Meyerhold, Piscator and Brecht opened up new roads for relations between dramatists, directors, actors and audiences. In the 1970s, however, developments in the field took on a more radical shape. Brecht and Meyerhold had aimed at the theatrical reforms on the basis of their social commitment, whereas the Latin American Chicano and North American Black Theatres were interested not primarily in preserving a theatrical institution and tradition, but in a fusion of theatre and social context.

Consequently, the systematic use of a theatre for educating the public was nothing new in Europe, either in religious or secular circles. Its use for mobilizing people to political resistance against the ruling class is of a later date, however. During the years of the young Weimar Republic (1918-1933), Erwin Piscator (1893-1966) developed his ideas about political theatre in his *Proletarisches Theater.* Piscator accepted the actor not as a person who makes a psychological portrayal, but as one of the many design components, alongside light, colour, music, staging and projection (Hunningher 1983: 136). His visual documentary theatre - a rather unusual artistic notion that also affected ideas about design-played a major role in the German agitprop theatre which flourished from the time of the German Revolution (1918) to the takeover by the Nazis.

In the 1920s Brecht's ideas and works were strongly influenced by the theatre of his day, which he was also reacting against. Beer and De Schutter (1978: 29) report that in Brecht's eyes the theatre had become an institution, a business that placed profits above the two functions he himself thought essential for all theatre: the drama ought to be a realistic portrayal of current reality, and it had to communicate insights into that reality. Theatrical reforms that affected only outward manifestations thus did not meet Brecht's two criteria. Brecht called such new developments in staging, which lacked innovation in substantial terms, 'culinary theatre'.

Some of Brecht's (1970: 64-66) criticism of the theatrical developments he saw taking place around him was directed at the creation of the so-called 'fourth wall', which characterized the acting methods of Naturalism. He objected specifically to the actors ignoring the audience or rather, the failure to confront the audience with the fact that the actors are well aware of its presence. Brecht did not agree with this style of acting because of his opposition to the audience identifying with the characters on stage unless the world created on stage reflected the same reality in which the audience lived. Brecht did not want an audience of passive consumers. He wanted an active audience that he could excite not so much by what was happening on stage as by what was happening in the street.

This view influenced ideas on theatre as a medium, as a didactic instrument. Educative theatre distinguished itself from other types of theatre because of the fact that it aimed primarily at the process of awareness raising among their audience, to which the medium of

theatre was subordinate. First of all, educative theatre was meant to change the view which the target groups had of reality: to have them consider things in a different way than they were used to. Secondly, educative theatre was designed to provide as many means as possible for the target group to realize the desired interventions of their reality.

Later on, in the 1960s and 1970s, educative theatre was used as a collective term for various kinds of theatre. However, all had in common the fact that they focused on problem raising productions for a very consciously chosen target roup.

4.1. Education, entertainment and politics: the didactic dramaturgy of Bertolt Brecht

In his didactic dramaturgy Brecht distinguished a Grand and a Small Pedagogy. Small Pedagogy served only to democratize the organization of stage productions during transition periods of social revolutions. Crucial in obtaining a truly democratised organization was the use of a collective working approach in preparing, managing and staging productions. Grand Pedagogy, however, should change the role of drama completely. It should eliminate the systematic distinction that had been made between the actor and the spectator. This is what Brecht had in mind for the periods succeeding a social revolution. Then, there should only be actors, who act and learn at the same time. It was with this Grand Pedagogy in mind that Brecht wrote his didactic plays.

However, Brecht was realistic enough to be aware that the division between the two forms of pedagogy would not simply disappear after the revolution. But, in his view, one should at least try to have amateurs and professional actors together use the whole theatrical apparatus in order to weaken the bourgeois ideological vision of theatre, and to motivate the general public for post-revolutionary reconstruction (Schivelbusch 1975: 357).

In the works of Brecht one can certainly distinguish propagandistic elements, particularly in the case of what are known as his *Lehrstücke*. In view of Brecht's rather specifically detailed theatrical didactics, however, I would prefer to speak of the educative and activating aspects of his plays. According to De Bruyne (1980: 117-118), five pedagogical attitudes can be distinguished in Brecht's work which can be understood as conditions for his didactic dramaturgy: the approach of the performer should be 'experimental and exploratory' and he should strive for a blend of instruction and entertainment; multiple methods should be used; the performer should be open with regard to using other media; and the play in one way or another should bear a relationship to everyday life. The fifth pedagogical attitude is that the combined use of the other four should make the teacher superfluous.

In his *Lehrstücke* Brecht provided a model for confronting actors with situations which, through their actions and dialogue, they could criticize and draw lessons from. It must be pointed out that Brecht wrote his didactic pieces for workers and schoolchildren, not for professional actors.

> "Moreover, the reader must not forget that the *Lehrstücke* were created in a time with a well organized labour movement and a high degree of class consciousness.(...). What the *Lehrstücke* were supposed to teach the actors, according to Brecht, was the fact that theories must continually be held up against reality if they are not to freeze into ideologies" (Bourse n.d.: 12).[1]

The didactic play teaches while being acted rather than viewed. While he is acting, the actor gains insight into the roles he and his fellow actors are playing. These roles are representative of actual social behaviour. Through repeated performances of the play the actor learns to analyse how he reacts to himself, to others and to the world around him. This is also why in his didactic plays Brecht put so much emphasis on depicting visible reality and human relations as they are shaped by industrial society.

After 1933 Brecht's attention shifted to 'epic drama'. According to Kok (1975: 453), the difference between Brecht's epic theatre and his didactic plays is that the former attempts to give a dialectic explanation of socially determined behaviour in a bourgeois society, whereas the latter attempt to teach the dialectic behaviour that leads to the political attitude needed for conscious political behaviour. In other words, epic theatre explains social behaviour to the audience, and didactic theatre uses drama to activate a target group or group of 'actors'.

In his writings about 'epic theatre', Brecht wrestled with the search for a balance between the educative and entertaining values of his plays and productions. Brecht (1962: 21) himself says:

> "(...) it is the general opinion that a very decided difference exists between learning and being entertained. The former may be useful, but only the latter is pleasant. Thus we have to defend the epic theatre against a suspicion that it must be an extremely unpleasant, a joyless, indeed a wearying business. Well, we can only say that the contrast between learning and being entertained does not necessarily exist in nature; it has not always existed and it need not always exist. Undoubtedly, the kind of learning we experienced in school, in training for a profession, etc., is a laborious business. But consider under what circumstances and for what purpose it is done. It is, in fact, a purchase. Knowledge is simply a commodity. It is acquired for the purpose of being resold."

In his 'epic drama' Brecht tries to achieve an optimal relationship between entertainment and learning. He could do this only by expanding on paper his ideas about non-Aristotelian drama, with all the implications this had for acting.

Although the term 'epic drama' was borrowed from Piscator, Brecht's (1970: 119) ideas and writings on the subject were quite the opposite. He found Piscator's development of a non-Aristotelian drama to be a success, but found less interesting his attempt to create epic drama by using documentary films or photographs to keep reminding the audience of reality (Brecht 1970: 30-33).

So what did Brecht mean by 'realism'? Generally realism refers to the 19th century movement in art and literature which is most clearly manifested in France between 1830 and 1880. The purpose of Realism was to give a truthful, objective and impartial representation of the real world, based on meticulous observations of contemporary life. As a result Realism is characterized by a lack of 'style', or rather by having a 'transparent style': for being a simulation or mirror of reality.

Confusion surrounding 'realism' can be traced to the many views that existed about what actually constituted 'reality'. In any case, it was the reality of the artist's own period in time. From this point of view realism is obviously timeless. It can depict reality in the 1980s just as easily here and now as the realistic writers depicted their reality in the last century. Therefore, according to Schipper (1979: 68-80), the social function of realism is historically relative; it changes according to circumstance.

The socialist realism that developed in the first half of this century for this reason found such a period-related notion of realism unacceptable. For the defenders of socialist realism, Schipper (1979: 53) says, realism must be seen as an interplay between reality as it presents itself to us, and the artistic production. For Brecht (1970: 160), socialist realism meant '(...) a faithful depiction of society from the socialist point of view, using the tools of art.' In his view socialist realism can be achieved in the theatre only in a 'dialectical form of theatre' in which it becomes clear to the spectator that his own social position is the result of a man-made historical process of stabilizing power relationships. Only with this awareness can the spectator take his 'destiny' into his own hands, taking action to intervene in social events outside the

theatrical performance. According to Brecht, this in the end is the only way to change societal relationships.

With this view of reality, Brecht formulated his ideas about 'epic drama', another term to which he assigned a meaning which in no way coincided with conventional usage, and which therefore created some confusion among people with more established views about the theatre. When Brecht, as a dramatist, speaks of 'epic theatre', he is referring more to the narrative technique of dramatization than to the literary form of the epic poem. In historical terms, the narrative technique and the poetic form are of course closely related.

Epic poems were traditionally told by *raconteurs* who acted out major events, such as the journeys of the hero and his conquests in war and love. Brecht (1970: 80) sought a narrative form of acting in which 'the play began to narrate', and points of view were presented both in the dialogues and in the acting itself. Therefore Brecht explicitly made use of the character of the narrator to explain the action and remind the audience of earlier episodes in the same story.

The concept of 'epic theatre' as used by Brecht was seen by many as paradoxical; following Aristotle, it was customary to make a clear distinction between the epic and the dramatic forms of recounting a fable. But according to Brecht (1965: 70), the difference is not in the fact that one form is presented by living people (actors) while the other form makes use only of the author's written word (in book form); epic works like those of Homer and of the medieval bards were extremely theatrical, while a work of drama like Goethe's *Faust* has its greatest dramatic impact if it is read as a book. The dramatic is equally present in epic works, according to Brecht (1970: 78-79), just as much as the epic is present in dramatic works, and with the rise of the bourgeois novel it became impossible to imagine the epic without the dramatic.

> "The problem with this special term is that there is no such thing as a play without an epic element. Discussion of Brecht's use of the word led to an orgy of interpretations which in fact are of little value for his practice. He understood this shortcoming and placed more and more emphasis on his societal aim: his drama must force the audience to take part in the class struggle, and to do this it must *dialectize*.
> Most important of all, the theatre must do this in a *'naive'* way: straightforward didactics is not enough; it is also important to demonstrate and to teach in an attractive, stimulating manner" (Hunningher 1983: 145-146).[2]

Brecht's epic drama is thus concerned primarily with the relationships between people as these have evolved in social history. Epic theatre must present scenes in which the characters respond to each other in such a way that the social context which dictates how they must behave towards eachother becomes clear.

Moreover, these scenes should not give the audience the feeling of sharing a destiny, as Brecht (1970: 71) claimed for Aristotelian drama, but rather a feeling that one can make one's own history by actively intervening in reality. Under the influence of Brecht, says Müller (1975: 473), the term 'epic' thus gradually evolved into a synonym for 'open form'.

> "Epic (open) became diametrically opposed to 'dramatic' (closed), and came, in this pair of concepts to indicate a formal tendency which, especially nowadays, upsets traditional genre distinctions and questions the distinction epic/dramatic. As general characteristics of the 'epic' or 'open' form we indicate: a panoramic multitude of the narrated facts; a loose and discontinuous plot; great emphasis on the narrative function; a connection with and inclination towards reality" (Van Berlaer-Hellemans 1979: 99).[3]

Brecht's (1970: 70) interest in 'epic theatre' was mainly practical. He related human behaviour

and social relations to economic and political power structures in society, which in principle could be changed. 'The essence of epic theatre is perhaps that it appeals not so much to the audience's feelings as to its intelligence (ration)' (Brecht 1970: 29). He cared less about the audience sympathizing with the characters than about their understanding the nature of the relationships among them.

This is not at all to say that this type of theatre may not arouse emotions in the audience. But the feeling of excitement or irritation or anger should be directed more towards the reality in which the spectator lives than the reality that is presented on stage. According to Hunningher (1983: 144-146), the aim of Brecht's 'epic drama' was to narrate in such a way that the spectator was forced not only to be alert and take an active part in the story, but also to form a judgement aboutdiffering degrees to which characters made choices within the play on the basis of a sense of responsibility.

It would seem from the preceding that for Brecht, in the end, it was the actors in the performance that were central, not so much the visualized argument. Theatre for Brecht was acting and not visualization. 'To Brecht', said Hunningher (1983: 144), 'the text and with it the structure and the layers of the entire play remained of absolute importance and thus the unassailable foundation of the stage performance.'[4] But the script had to be presented in the play in such a way that, despite the separation between audience and actors, the actors created their characters so that it was clear to the audience that the actors did not identify with them. Therefore Brecht introduced anti-illusory ways and techniques of theatrical representation, which were called 'alienation effects':

> "A representation that alienates is one which allows us to recognize its subject, but at the same time makes it seem unfamiliar. The classical and medieval theatre alienated its characters by making them wear human or animal masks; the Aziatic theatre even today uses musical and pantomimic A-effects" (Brecht 1965: 192).

4.2. Activating and educative theatre: the didactic dramaturgy of Augusto Boal

In terms of didactics, the Brazilian director Augusto Boal was influenced by the theories of his countryman Paulo Freire. Dramaturgically speaking he was inspired by the ideas and work of Brecht. Not only did he borrow from Freire the notion of 'conscientization', he also drew parallels between the passivity and 'consumerism' of the students who go to school, and the passivity of the audience that goes to the theatre and is forced to adopt an attitude of passive consumerism. One of Boal's books is called *Theatre of the Oppressed*, which reminds us very much of Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

For many years Augusto Boal taught at the Sao Paulo School of Drama. In 1956 he became the artistic manager of the Arena Theatre[5] in Sao Paulo and produced plays from both the classical and the modern world repertoire. In the 1960s Boal began a series of experiments aimed at presenting drama - or, more accurately, theatrical forms - to large segments of his society which, he felt, needed to become more socially and politically aware of its situations. Thus, a kind of popular theatre was developed at the Teatro de Arena de Sao Paulo between the late 1950s and the 1960s, at the same time that Paulo Freire was working on literacy in Brazil through the Centros Populares de Cultura (CPC's) (Bakker 1980: 19).

On the basis of theatrical forms, Boal developed his ideas of what is commonly known as 'popular' theatre, or sometimes as 'people's theatre'. In Brazil, Argentina, Peru and in other countries, Boals's aim was not to give the people finished products *per se*, because, as he explained in an interview:

> "(...) even if one were to do this, these 'products' (plays and performances) would not

be their own production, something originating within and from themselves and their own reality. What you can do is provide the means of production in the area of theatre, in other words, teach the people how to make theatre" (Driskell 1975: 73).

Boal drew his inspiration for working with his target groups or audience in this way from the didactic dramaturgy of Brecht. All traditional methods for creating a dramatic imaginary world were rejected by Boal and his group. Boal shared Brecht's view that the audience must be critical with regard to what happens on stage. In the above mentioned interview with Driskell (1975: 72), Boal in fact states that Brecht

> "(...) was a great influence because he taught us that our obligation as artists was to shed light on reality, not only to reflect and interpret reality, but to try to change it. The other big influence on my orientation was the Brazilian circus, the clownish acts performed at the circus (...). A tradition of political vaudeville existed in Brazil, and that influenced my work as well. So if I may say that there were two major influences on my theatre, they were Bertold Brecht and the circus."

On the basis of his experience with his group Arena Stage, Boal says that as an artist he felt the need to make himself useful to oppressed social groups in Brazil. This brought him to the development of a popular theatre that dealt with the problems of the oppressed groups. The problem he and his actors ran up against, however, was the fact that they themselves did not suffer from discrimination and never felt oppressed! Slowly they experienced a kind of separation between the reality within or outside the theatre.

A good example of such problems is the last play Boal produced in Brazil. It dealt with the revolution and referred to the second 'coup' in Brazil in 1968. Painful irony had it that while the revolution was being performed inside the theatre, the real thing was happening outside. Boal and his group then decided to abandon all their pretentions. It was accepted that one cannot play for the oppressed if one does not belong to the oppressed oneself. They left the theatre, which had been accessible to the ticket-buying public only, and went to factories, local cultural centres and church societies ('social nuclei'). They did not go out to perform for the people, thus showing them the ultimate product of a creative process, but to stimulate them and to give them the means of producing plays themselves.

Newspaper' theatre was the first theatrical form they developed and propagated. There are various types of 'newspaper theatre'[6]. What all have in common is that 'news' is translated into criticaltheatre. An example of this is the newspaper article about a menu that Brazil's Economic Affairs Minister was served at an official dinner. The same minister had appealed to the Brazilian people to live economically only the day before. The news was read while the actor portraying the minister stuffed himself from a sumptuously laid table.

It gradually got through to the government what Boal and Arena Stage were up to. The government closed down the theatre. Actors would be put in jail for a few days. Finally Boal himself was arrested and sent to prison. He was detained for three months.[7]

No longer welcome in either Brazil or Argentina, Boal ended up in Peru, where in 1973 he found a job as a drama teacher in the *Operación Alfabetización Integral (ALFIN)*, the national literacy campaign launched by the revolutionary government, which based its approach on the methods developed by Paulo Freire. Here for the first time Boal had the chance to try out his ideas about the Theatre of the Oppressed in all its forms. For Boal this had to be a theatre in which oppressed people speak up for themselves, not for others. In this respect the Theatre of the Oppressed differs from 'solidarity theatre', which, Boal (1980: 84) says, is morally worthwhile, but is theatre **about** the oppressed and not **of** the oppressed.

In his *Teatro del oprimido y otras poéticas políticas* (Theatre of the Oppressed and Other Political Poetics) he turns his attention to various 'poetics', such as those of Aristotle, Machia-

velli, Hegel and Brecht (cf. Driskell 1975: 77). In this book Boal tries to demonstrate that every artist is necessarily political, even if an author such as Aristotle expressly states that there is no relationship between politics and art. Central to Boal's line of thinking is the transformation of a passively watching audience into an acting subject, an actor, a reformer of the dramatic action on stage. Boal (1978: 245; 1979: 1-50) rejects what Brecht saw as the Aristotelian relationship between spectator and actor in which the audience gives the actors the power to put a character on stage that acts and thinks for andinstead of the audience. According to Boal (1978: 245; 1979: 83-115), Brecht had already rejected Aristotelian principles and argued in favour of a poetics in which the spectators allow actors to put a character on stage that acts for them but not one that thinks for them. Ideally the audience reserves the right to think for itself about the action of the character. Only when this is the case can we speak of raising the consciousness of the audience, or, as Boal quotes Freire, conscientization.

Boal's own approach (Boal 1978: 245) in his poetics of the oppressed goes one step further. The spectator does not give the actor the power to act, nor the power to think for him. On the contrary, the spectator himself uses the occasion to play and act, and thus to think and act in the role of the protagonist. The actor decides on the acting, changes the dramatic action, brings in solutions of his own when problems threaten to leave the dramatic action at a dead end, and thus prepares himself, while acting, for real actions that could be taken later in the every day reality. In that sense Boal does not speak so much of revolutionary theatre, but of theatre as a rehearsal, a preparation, for societal reforms.

ALFIN's literacy campaign, then, was part of a larger context of adult education. The desire was to teach three to four million illiterate people to read and write in a period of four years. This was quite a considerable task for a country where three main languages can be distinguished: Spanish, Quechua and Aymara, and within the indigenous main languages hundreds of dialects. The population spoke Spanish poorly and there was even a certain resistance to speaking Spanish, in an attempt to protect the people's own culture. They would understand it, but act as if they did not.

The most important aims of this project were (1) literacy in the native language and in Spanish, (2) literacy in all possible 'languages', and particularly in the expressive and artistic languages such as are used in the theatre, in photography, puppet theatre, film, newspapers, etc. The campaign was concerned with different socialgroups in various regions: the slum areas, rural areas, mining areas, etc.

The ALFIN workers took recourse to the artistic 'languages' because they did not want to suggest to the illiterate population that their own way of expression might be considered as non expressive. On the contrary, they wanted to help to develop the target-group's sense of self-respect, of its own cultural identity. Unable to read and write the official languages, the people could best vent their problems in their own expressive 'languages'.

Boal was made co-ordinator of a number of theatre projects in the slum areas round Lima, for which he re-worked his previously written approach with reference to the poetics of the oppressed into a 'theatre of the oppressed'. New to Peru was 'photonovel theatre':

> "It's a method based on illustrations used for pictures in women's magazines. The illustrations tend to show people who have jobs and who are idyllically happy even though they may not have enough money for their next meal. (...) When the spectators compare their story with the magazine story, they sense quite clearly a gap in the social vision. Next time they see such magazines, they question the base, the reality. They become much more critical and analytical not only of what they read but of what they see on television and hear on the radio" (Mellgren 1978: 113-114).

Photonovel theatre was specially used in working with women. However, next to photo-novels

the genuine life stories of the women themselves were used in literacy-*cum*-drama sessions. One such true life anecdote used was about an illiterate woman who one day was asked by her husband to keep some letters for him, with the remark that these were very important documents. One day the couple had a row, and the husband left the house in anger. The woman suspected that this might have something to do with those letters, and she had a neighbour read them to her. They turned out to be love letters.

Some volunteers acted out this situation. The rest of the audience was asked what would be the best reaction to the deceived woman. Solutions were suggested and acted out. None of them worked. Then one of the women in the audience suggested waiting for the man with a large piece of wood and giving him a sound trashing, and after that putting dinner on the table as if nothing had happened and asking how things had been at work. The solution was acted out and made sense to the audience as well as to the actors.

'Image theatre' and 'forum theatre' first appeared in Peru, while Boal was working there with teachers and literacy trainers in the ALFIN campaign promoted by the Velasco government. Forum theatre was used in working with the labourers of a small fish factory in Chimbote. Their working conditions and working hours were abominable. Particularly working long days (12 hours a day) without financial remuneration was something they found very hard to take. That is why the labourers sought a solution to this problem by means of forum theatre. One suggestion was 'Operation Tortoise', which meant a go-slow. Another suggestion during drama rehearsals was exactly the opposite, speeding up the tempo of working until the machines would be overloaded. A third possibility was placing a bomb, or setting fire to the factory. And finally, strikes were also suggested.

All these suggestions were tried out within the script of the basic sketch, but none of them was found to work. Even strikes were no use, as the labourers were not organized and therefore had no strike fund. Finally, acting did lead to action in reality. The labourers founded a union which was to educate them as regards politics, and to set up a strike fund. This clearly shows what political implications theatre-for-development may have within the context of adult education, striving for a just society.

4.3. Popular theatre as a didactic tool: from Brecht to Boal and further

'Being popular is one thing, becoming popular is another', Brecht (1965: 112) wrote in his essay *The Popular and the Realistic*. Brecht tried to incorporate into his plays forms of cultural expression that were popular among the common people in his day, such as wrestling matches and Karl Valentin's beer hall comedies. No doubt he hoped that this would make his performances just as popular with a proletarian audience as were the forms of entertainment from which he borrowed.

Nonetheless, for Brecht, not every form of popular culture was the progressive or 'open' form he considered useful for his purposes. Take, for example, folk stories. Not every folk story was appropriate because some had very clear and unavoidable messages. This is why Brecht preferred stories based on an 'open' structure, such as that of the parable.

In this sense popularity is a highly relative concept. An example of this is 'common man's' *(Volk)* popular theatre: theatre in which life was depicted and which evoked sentiments rather than served as an incitement to action. It presented a traditional imaginary world which appealed easily to a large group of people unfamiliar with theatre, by virtue of its strong sentiments which stood out prominently in a dramatic atmosphere of injustice.

Brecht (1965: 108) considered popular art to be 'intelligible to the broad masses, taking over their forms of expression and enriching them, adopting and consolidating their standpoint, representing the most progressive section of the people in such a way that it can take over leadership (...) linking the tradition and carrying it further (...).'

Brecht thus urges the dramatist to 'adopt' the culture of the lower classes or even to

'take it over', and then to give it back in an adapted theatrical context. It seems here that in one way or another the people are denied control of their own forms of expression. And this, according to Schechter (1983: 20), is perhaps the reason why Brecht's performances were not particularly popular at the time among working class people.

This point of view is very similar to those of a number of Latin American theatremakers who made useof 'popular theatre' in the 1970s to support social changes within society. Pica (1979: 70-71), who tried to spell out their ideas about 'popular theatre' more clearly, summarized it as follows:

> "Whatever form popular theatre takes, it must be vital and vitalizing, entertaining, intelligent, and provoking of the intelligence of the people. The essential must be the content, the ideas, the problems and conflicts that are presented, the personalities of the characters must correspond with living persons, and the authentic truth of the people must be reflected"[8].

Others see popular theatre as changing traditional structures and drawing themes from daily life, especially the social conflict that can occur in a trade union, in a community, in a factory. A statement made by Boal (1979: 72) illustrates how theatremakers have wrestled with the description and implementation of the concept of popular theatre:

> "The conventional belief is that popular theatre must be close to circus, whether as text or as performance. This opinion is widespread and generally accepted. We disagree absolutely, just as we would disagree with anyone who would state that TV drama, given its peculiar emotional violence, is a valid form of popular art. We believe, on the contrary, that the most important characteristic of the theatre which addresses itself to the people must be its permanent clarity, its ability to reach the spectator, appealing to his intelligence and sensitivity, without circumlocation or mystification."

How are we to relate this statement to Boal's (1975: 161-175) detailed assertation that there are as many ways of making popular theatre as there are audiences, and that all of them are to some extent legitimate and effective as long as actors and audience continue to believe in them? It is not surprising, in view of his theatrical activities and his ideas about the social function of theatre, that he scorned the phenomenon of television and denied that drama in his inventory and classification of forms of popular theatre.

For Boal theatre is popular only if it represents the interests of the community of the people in their process of liberation. Boal (1972: 5-20) draws a clear distinction between genuine popular theatre, pseudo popular theatre and anti popular theatre.

1) Genuine Popular Theatre
   (a) propaganda theatre
   (b) cultural theatre
   (c) didactic theatre

2) Pseudo Popular Theatre

3) Anti Popular Theatre

Fig. 8 Boal's Classification of Forms of Popular Theatre (Source: Boal 1979)

Genuine popular theatre is theatre which is made for and by the community, and which eventually is accepted by the community as part of its culture. Genuine popular theatre for and by the community refers, according to Boal, to those 'performances that in general are conducted by trade unions, on public squares, at fairs etc., in accordance with the changing perspective of the people, for whom it is at the same time intended. The different purposes change the structure of the works, the interpretation of the style and communication with the people.'

Genuine popular propaganda theatre is born of the need to add impetus to social manifestations outside the theatre, such as strikes, demonstrations or elections. It is a sort of instant theatre with a simple structure and a direct style, although Boal warns against underestimating the richness and complexity of this form of popular theatre. But its complexity is different from that of genuine cultural popular theatre, because the action and the interpretation are dictated less by the psychology of the characters than by the ability of the actors and script to adapt to various audiences and to their regional symbols, cultural conventions and spontaneous reactions during the performances.

Genuine didactic popular theatre revolves around more general themes than does either propaganda or cultural theatre. What it points to, according to Boal, is neither directly present nor subject to mobilization. The aim is not to mobilize the public with respect to something that is going to happen, but rather to make a critical analysis of a social or political problem, or a specific problem in a specific working situation. This is why the repertoire, the structure and the techniques of staging offer many possibilities: from presenting adapted or unadapted versions of classical works that carry messages relevant to contemporary issues, to dramatized explanations of the value of continuing education for adults as part of campaigns to raise consciousness.

Genuine cultural popular theatre is understood as certain theatrical forms that deal with general cultural problems within the community in a less direct manner. Here Boal is saying that for him, genuine popular theatre does not always have to serve political purposes nor does it even need to refer to the immediate socio-economic consequence of actions. It might just as easily be directed at an inability to communicate which results from strict cultural conventions, moral or religious taboos, etc. which make it impossible to talk about problems such as loneliness, *machismo* and homosexuality. Boal says that repertory plays can be adapted to such purposes, or the community's own forms of theatrical expression can be used, as long as the aim remains to raise the consciousness of the community.

Pseudo popular theatre refers to forms of theatre and performances which could very well be of interest and importance to the community but whichare accessible to only a small portion of the community because of the price of admission or psychological barriers such as fear of entering a theatre or auditorium. This type of theatre is in fact meant for the middle classes in the community, because commercialization has created an economic or socio-ideological obstacle to the process of liberating and emancipating the community.

And finally to Boal, anti popular theatre is identical to mass theatre: produced by specialized members of the elite in order to inculcate in the common people the dominant ideology. In this case it makes no difference whether this type of theatre is performed in large halls, in stadiums or in small rooms, or whether admission is free or practically free; anything about these performances that appears popular is an illusion, according to Boal, because 'it concerns productions that depict social conflicts dramatically in such a way, that the real causes are concealed and the reactions of the people neutralized.'

Boal stresses two techniques characteristic of anti popular theatre which are designed to mislead the audience or community. In the first place, major social themes or conflicts are presented in such a way that the audience identifies with the underdog in the play and thus looses sight of the indoctrinating aspect of the performance as a whole. Secondly, everything

that the members of the community value about their own community is reinforced on stage in such a way that the audience is disarmed of any feelings of rebellion or belief that things should change.

With the use of either of these techniques the audience is given such a sense of moral dignity that it would be almost sacriligeous for them to contradict this image of themselves which has been projected from outside.

Anti popular theatre differs from genuine and pseudo popular theatre in that it is in no way popular. It is theatre which the makers clearly intended to be popular because the performance at first seems to be in sympathy with the people. In fact it is used by the 'oppressors' as another wayof silencing 'the oppressed'. It is theatre for the masses in which social conflicts are depicted in such a way that their true causes are concealed. It is in this sense that the terms 'indoctrinaire' or 'populistic' theatre are often used in Latin America.

> "Popular is that which is concerned with the people, or better yet that which belongs to the people. This is why popular theatre will be that which is capable of communicating with the people in an effective way, by speaking their language and addressing their problems. Populistic is that which takes the easy way of superficially depicting reality for the single purpose of entertaining and pleasing the people. The populistic sells art as a commodity and deepdown is actually disdainful of the people" (Artiles 1979: 76-77).

The Cuban writer Abraham Rodriguez (cf. van Duin 1983: 80-82) would like to have the term popular theatre used only for authentic people's theatre, while populistic theatre refers to the vulgar and cliché-ridden imitation of popular forms of theatrical expression on stage meant to draw a mass audience and to give a performance a 'folksy' flavour.

Populistic theatre, on the one hand, was a term used by theatremakers to criticize the forms of theatre which governments since time immemorial have liked to think of as national theatre, the heritage of the country's theatrical tradition, but which, according to Dominquez (1978: 26), could by no means claim to enjoy any measure of popularity among the people. The term populistic theatre was used on the other hand to criticize both old and new forms of theatre created by the government to entertain the people on a massive scale and to influence them by appealing, in the performances, to patriotic and nationalistic sentiments. Or, as Kerr (1982: 47-48) writes: 'populistic theatre is theatre of overtly political hagiography or somewhat coopted developmentalist drama in which critical thought is hindered by state repression.'

Raul Leis, a theatre director and front-line worker from Panama, uses popular theatre to support processes of social change among the audience. One of his plays, *Lo Peor de Boxeo*, is a prime example of popular theatre, according to Carrera (1981: 41), because it was performed mainly at trade union meetings in popular cultural centres; faced with, and, in keeping with Brecht's ideas, the metaphor for the play was borrowed from a popular sporting event, the boxing match.

But apart from his dramatic presentations, Leis (1979: 12-13) is also important on account of his ideas about popular theatre. According to Leis (n.d.: 3), to be popular means that the performance must be understandable by the whole community; must be built on popular forms of expression and must make positive use of the people's traditions.

Leis distinguishes three forms of popular theatre:
1) popular theatre for the people
2) popular theatre by and for the people, and
3) popular theatre by, for and of the people.
Theatre for the people is aimed exclusively at the local population in order to stimulate the community to social change. The objection of the theatre group can be didactic, i.e. they

mean to transmit an educational message to the village or district such as the difference between breast feeding and bottle feeding for babies, or the prevention of diarrhoea through organized action.
The aim can also be cultural: to maintain the characteristic theatrical tradition of the local community.

Then there is theatre organized by and for the people. Usually the impulse comes from an assembly or a popular organization (NGO) such as a trade union, a co-operative or a local religious aid organization. The technique used here is mostly socio-drama, which may or may not grow into a 'collage-style' performance: i.e. music, song, dance and dialogue used alternately.

Finally, there is theatre organized by, for and of the people, organized by and for the community, in which the spectator actively takes part in the performance.

4.4. Final remarks

As regards Brecht's influence on theatre in the Third World, El-Amari (1980: 43-65), Bennewitz (1980: 95-107), Blanco Olivares (1980: 19-41), and Fiebach (1980: 67-93) have supplied clear outlines for the Arabic world, the Asian countries, Latin America and Africa South of the Sahara, respectively. With the exception of Fiebach's contributions on Brecht's influence in Africa, these profound articles are mainly concerned with the social pressure under which Brecht productions have come about in the different countries. Less attention, however, is given to the importance and the influence of Brecht's views on theatre in relation to the endogeneous development of theories concerning dramaturgy and theatre innovations in the Third World.[9] Moreover, the aforesaid authors confined themselves mainly to describing those productions abroad in which Brecht's plays were staged with a maximum degree of authenticity.

Initially these were sober representations of Brecht's own ideals for epic theatre. The directors followed Brecht as closely as they could, without making any adaptations to the local situation. Brecht was copied, not adopted.

This was criticized. The Colombian director Enrique Buenaventura (1969: 115) pointed out that the world of Brecht was hardly the world of Latin America at the end of the 1960s. According to Castagnino (1975: 34) Buenaventura therefore made use of themes, metaphors and allegories well known among the broad layers of Latin American society, and taking the spectacular context of the *fiesta* as a point of departure of his performances. Brecht's ideas and techniques should be translated into the Latin American context, as Buenaventura in his play *En la Diestra de Dios Padre* had tried to blend 'archaic forms - native elements of a rather oriental character and medieval Spanish elements - and certain forms of epic theatre developed in Europe by Piscator, Meyerhold and Brecht'(Buenaventura 1965: 121).

But apart from these performances of mainly 'epic plays' by the big leading and usually national theatre companies, which aimed at authenticity in their productions, one can find, on the other hand, among the small theatre companies in developing countries, adaptations of Brecht's plays performed for a more popular audience.

According to Blanco Olivares (1980: 19-41) and Reyes (1980: 62-66), in the various Latin American countries Brecht's ideas had been experimented with and had led to what has been called *Teatro Nuevo* (NewTheatre)[10], which I will discuss in the next chapter. The experiments in Latin America were not only based on the dramatic techniques and the theatrical metaphors suggested by Brecht, but were also based on a way of working of which Brecht (1975: 325-326) had spoken so hopefully back in 1930. In his view, once the workers were in power after the revolution (Grand Pedagogy), there should be a different sort of didactic theatre from the one used by revolutionary groups just before and during the revolution (Small Pedagogy).

Whereas, in the twenties, European authors and directors such as Brecht and Piscator

aimed at a theatre reform inspired by their personal social engagement, the Latin americans, such as Briski, Buenaventura and Boal in the sixties, wanted to use drama for social reform. These Latin american authors and directors not only borrowed from Brecht's plays, but also from his writings about the theatre, and his ideas of the didactics of theatre. In line Brecht's Small Pedagogy they concluded that theatre had to be produced in a more democratic manner: theatre as a collective creation.

Boal even went a step further in his attitude. He started to work in the direction of Brecht's ideas concerning a Grand Pedagogy. If we are dealing with a collective creation, he argued, then the audience will also have to be involved in the performance as a creative power. And as soon as one accepts the audience as creator of drama, then the process of making drama will become more important than the product (the performance or play) that is made. Furthermore, drama that is made in co-operation with the audience will have to find a connection to the social reality of that particular audience.

V.
Popular Theatre from a Theatre Historical Point of View

The countries of Europe had settled down again after post-war reconstruction and, as a result of agreements made at Yalta, were rapidly losing their colonies. Contrary to all expectations, economies had recovered and provisions were made for a degree of social welfare undreamed of before the war. But for the post-war generations, these benefits of the welfare state were not enough. They were seen as a way of keeping the people quiet. What was wanted was social reform.

In the 1960s the desire for new forms of theatre ran parallel to their desire for social reform and new forms of community life. It was the time of teamwork, worker's participation in management, democratization and involvement in decision making, both in society at large and in the theatre. Communalism and collective action were highly valued. In society at large, these trends were apparent in the search for approaches to education and child rearing which were based not on transmission from an authoritarian figure but on the world as experienced by the child itself. Policy in both the public and private sectors called for democratic participation in decision making. Selfreliance was something to be stimulated. Young intellectual dramatists abandoned the use of writers and directors; performances became products of co-operative effort in which regular rehearsals were replaced by improvisation sessions (Shank 1971: 170).

The objective of this kind of activating theatre in the 1960s and 1970s was to confront people (not necessarily the working classes) with the reality of their situation or with the real nature of power in society and their relationship to it, by involving them in a 'dramatic' situation. This was drama that opposed the dominant norms and values in the social system. It was drama that poked fun at petty bourgeois norms and made them look ridiculous for the purpose of liberating people from them. Itwas drama which supported social reform, and which in doing so often tossed around Marxist terminology. This made politicians and officials feel uneasy.

By explicitly juxtaposing 'theatre' and 'politics', theatre makers of the sixties and seventies accepted social responsibility with respect to the State (the administrators and policy makers), the Regime (the politicians) and that part of the population which they called the People. Any time there was friction between political and state interests on the one hand, and the interests of the people on the other, they used 'popular' or 'people's' theatre as a political instrument in the struggle to bring about social change.

A great variety of terms was used to describe these theatre trends: some groups spoke of educative drama, activating theatre, political, popular or people's theatre. The trends were by no means well-defined. The groups were widely different in terms of content as well as in terms of form. The performance in places where, in former days, drama was not even thought of, had become significant for people who were excluded by traditional drama up until then.

5.1. Shifting connotations of 'popular theatre'

After the storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789, popular theatre, i.e. theatre for the common people, became a recurring theme in French theatrical history. According to Campos (1976:3), there are many problems and ambiguities connected with the concept of *théâtre populaire*, at least as it is used in France. In the years immediately following the French Revolution, the term did not refer to theatrical forms that were traditionally performed and appreciated among the people, nor to theatre that was created for and by the people. It referred primarily to the fact that common people now had access to the playhouses where they were once not welcome, and to the fact that the people could be exposed to drama that would educate them in the ideas of continuing revolution. It was generally agreed that in the young republic, theatre should be subsidized by the state, that it should be educative and edifying, and that it should function as a 'school for patriotism' (Leith 1968: 32-42).

There was considerably less consensus among the various revolutionary factions about how drama was to keep the revolutionary ideas alive among the people. Girondins and Jacobins were so embroiled in conflict, and so alert to any hint of anti-revolutionary sentiment, that plays performed in the theatre one week would cause the director or actors to lose their heads the next week. Under strict censorship, the *Théâtre du Peuple* first concentrated on adaptations of existing plays. But since even an adaptation reflected a particular vision of theatre and society, people soon switched to writing new, 'revolutionary' plays. Each had to be a *spectacle* to compete with the still popular small variety shows, and later with the travelling circuses.

Little by little the idea of the *drâmes bourgeois*, as introduced in the 18th century by Sebastian Mercier and Diderot, found its way back into the theatre. These plays were meant to impress virtue through dramatic schemes drawing largely on melodrama. But in the end, the plays that became the most popular theatrical spectacles in the period following the revolution, the plays which best answered to the needs of the Paris working class and *petite bourgeoisie*, were the pieces of melodrama from the early 19th century, such as Pixérécourt's *Robinson Crusoë* (1805) as performed in his Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin. These were plays that depicted a world that was familiar and at the same time far removed.

> "A hundred years later, in 1903, the Théâtre du Peuple at Clichy was especially intended to use working-class subjects (...). In the 1940s Salacrou attempted to write plays for the workers about 'their own' problems to be performed by amateur groups within the popular communities.
>
> None of these examples worked for long. The *drame bourgeois* was overtaken by the Revolution. The Théâtre du Peuple closed after a year, like so many similar attempts around the turn of the century" (Campos 1976: 6).

However, until well into the Second World War the idea of *théâtre populaire* was very much interwoven with the cultural policy of the French governmental departments. A number of attempts were made to get popular theatre going on a national level. According to Sag (1974: 73), the Théâtre Nationale Populaire (TNP), regional drama centres, cultural centres, the festivals of Avignon and of Nancy, the influences that spread to the provinces through the 'cultural animators' - all of these in one way or another attempted to stimulate 'mass theatre', to reawaken forms of social participation that had long been forgotten.

The year 1968 was significant not just in French theatrical history but also because of social, intellectual and theatrical changes that took place all over the world[1]. In Europe the post-war generation were rebelling against the middle class conservative attitude to restoration existing among the generations who had experienced the Second World War. In a number of major cities throughout the world there were tumultuous outbursts by young intellectuals

who had different ideas about society and thus about theatre also. The 1968 students' revolts in Paris are the most frequently cited examples.

During the students' revolt in Paris in May 1968, the Odeon Theatre was occupied, its board of directors removed, and its stores of costumes put to use for the performance of improvised street plays (Shank 1971: 167). These events were part of the campaign set up by young activists, students and avant-garde popular theatremakers to use theatre to help bring about 'societal reforms'.

Unlike those concerned with the Theatre of the Absurd, they had a future ideal in mind. In fact they were tired of the pessimism of writers like Beckett and Ionesco; they wanted the popular director/playwright to make a clear, public political commitment to social reform. From 1968 through the mid-1970s, young intellectuals not only in France but all over the world, developed a view of society and theatre in which performances became a collective enterprise, sensitive to different audiences and to the experience of previous performances, rather than to one author's text; the playhouse was dispensed with, being too much a symbol of social control.

During the 1960s and 1970s popular theatre was no longer a concept that was self-evident.

> "Although in the early beginnings of drama, all theatre was popular, we now require the adjective 'popular' to distinguish a theatre that caters to an audience of working-class people from one that caters to the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, the term popular is ambiguous itself. To some people it means 'intended for the general public', i.e. for all classes in society. To others, it has a more radical, political significance and means 'of and for those people who sell their labor'; to this latter group, then, the term 'popular' is generic and denominates workers, peasants, students, petty bourgeois employees, office workers and the like" (Van Erven 1985: 6).

Because of the ambiguity that arose at that time regarding the term 'popular theatre', theatremakers in the 1960s and 1970s began to use the term 'people's theatre'. From then on this term was also used retrospectively to refer to earlier developments in the theatre in Russia and Germany in the first half of this century. According to Patterson (1983: 6), the most distinctive characteristics of people's theatre are:

1) a social and political consciousness that is progressive, i.e. democratic, egalitarian, looking ahead

2) a focus on a particular audience, or sometimes a particular political struggle and

3) a desire to align with the audience, not attack, insult, accuse or condescend to them, or profit by them.

5.2. Political, working-class and revolutionary theatre

If, like Pronko (1969: 91-93), we take political theatre to mean what Piscator took it to mean, i.e. an instrument to serve the 'revolutionary movement', then political theatre is short-lived and has no depth. Piscator's hope was for a classless society in which theatre would be a 'pure' art, liberated from politics. But as long as the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, mortal enemies in the class struggle, were attending Piscator's performances side by side without coming to blows, the 'revolution' had not yet arrived. Furthermore, history teaches us that the political theatre of such theatremakers as Piscator, Brecht, Briski, Buenaventura or Boal did not really create the social turnabouts which we call 'revolution'. Instead there was a social struggle, with drama and playwright at its service.

A division such as that presented by Pronko is somewhat too simplistic for the purpose

of this book, and does not adequately reflect the way in which political messages can reach the public through theatre. These vary from implicit criticism in an accepted theatrical context, to protest, blatant propaganda, and even to revolutionary agitation and direct action. Pronko's dual classification also entirely fails to take into account the degree of repression and censorship that can vary from one country to the next, and from one regime to the next. One thus loses sight of the social context in which theatre is stigmatised as 'political theatre'.

Agitprop theatre often accompanied the events and demonstrations used by organizations such as political parties and trade unions in their fight for the right to exist, and in support of the societal interests they represented. It is therefore significant, according to Van Kerkhoven (1979: 142), that both the Russian and German agitprop movements were supported by leading members of the artistic avant-garde of the time (Meyerhold, Maiakovski, Brecht, Eisler and Piscator, for example). In this type of theatre they saw, above all, a method. Theirs was a new attitude towards art: to them this type of theatre was above all a tool with which to build a socialist society.

Agitprop is short for 'agitation and propaganda', two ideas which played a major role in the history of class struggle as far back as to the first efforts to organize trade unions. Agitation means the arousal of feeling (indignation, discontent, enthusiasm, etc.), whereas propaganda appeals to reason and the intellectual capacities of the audience. For specific techniques, agitprop borrowed from earlier theatrical forms.

> "The dramaturgical roots still discernible in agitprop theatre are manifold: Commedia dell'arte, medieval popular theatre, theatre at the fairs, circus, cabaret, music hall, grotesque, mystery plays, forms of improvisation etc. It is difficult to bring all these roots under one heading" (Van Kerkhoven 1979: 144).

To call these techniques all popular theatre would be incorrect. Melodrama and blood-and-thunder plays, so popular with the people, have nothing to do with the agitprop approach. It would be better to refer to the aversion to 'naturalism' shared by all these forms of theatre, and to their preference for anti-illusory techniques, such as their variegated compositional mixture of, for example, allegories, collage, montage, documentary fragments, burlesque interludes, circus acts, imitations of court sessions, live newspapers, skits, recitals, etc.

It has been rightly stated that agitprop is found on the dividing line between acting and action, between fiction and reality.

> "Supporters as well as opponents of this kind of theatre can frequently be heard to say: 'This is not theatre, this is primarily political action" (Van Kerkhoven 1979: 140).

Agitprop theatre, therefore, is not a genre but a method, or rather, part of an ideology aimed at changing the world through a social and political process. Productions with an 'agitprop' approach are productions that wish to directly interfere with or relate to the current political issues outside the theatre in society.

In the 1920s and 1930s in the Soviet Union, Germany and Britain there was a strong tradition of working-class theatre which was supported by the trade unions or left-wing political groups, and which made use of this agitprop approach. According to Hudson (1971: 100-101), 'working-class theatre' refers to theatre which is meant 'to provide entertainment which is 'working class' in form and content or which is controlled by workers, to encourage a sense of class consciousness, or group or community solidarity, among all members of the audience (and possibly performers) from the same class, group or community.'

These working-class theatre activities, however, were more often controlled by young, middle-class intellectuals than by the workers themselves. This resulted in the expected friction regarding form and content of the performances. The initiators cared most about getting their

political message across to the audience; the audience wanted above all to be entertained in a way that was familiar to them. According to McGrath (1980: 152-156), a working class audience likes directness, comedy, music, emotions, variety in performing techniques, special effects, immediacy, and elements familiar to the locality:

> "These features of working class entertainment must be handled critically. Directness can lead to over-simplification. Comedy can be racist, sexist, even anti-working class. Music can become mindlessness. Emotion can become manipulative and can obscure judgement. Variety can lead to trivialization. Immediacy and localism can close the mind to the rest of the world, and lead to chauvinism. And a sense of identity with the performer can lead to nauseating, ingratiating performances with no dignity or perspective."

Whenever the subject matter was meant to be a realistic analysis of problems, the audience felt most comfortable when the themes were translated into forms of melodrama and music-hall entertainment. This is why directors such as Meyerhold and Brecht, who stated explicitly that their works should be appreciated by a working-class audience, borrowed techniques from music-hall, pantomime, melodrama, circus and boxing. They also took old repertory plays and adapted them to get their message across without spoiling their audience appeal.

Whereas working-class drama concentrates all its energy on reaching its target group, and leaves the politician or administrator apparently undisturbed, political theatre is openly directed against the ruling class and the system. Definitions here become rather tenuous because it is just as easy to turn them around. When working-class drama is seen to succeed in mobilizing its audience or target group enough to make the politician or bureaucrat feel threatened in the exercise of political or administrative power, that politician or bureau crat will then label the theatrical performance as 'politically' unacceptable and thus not to be tolerated.

Apart from the obvious fact that any form of theatre implicitly reflects a political attitude, since any performance that does not criticize the status quo accepts it, performances that deliberately present themselves as 'political theatre', or that are labelled by the State as such, have as their purpose to stimulate the audience towards political awareness or the support of political action. According to Hudson (1971: 100), the purpose of political theatre is to describe 'objectively' or communicate a political interpretation of particular events, contemporary or historical, and/or to expose an injustice; to portray what is happening in other countries, other parts of the same country, or events in working class situations; to rouse action through the emotions and the intellect, or at least to create support for action taken by others; to strengthen solidarity in a crisis situation, e.g. strike, war; to raise awareness about the possibility and desirability of a change in society and to demonstrate strategies and tactics to achieve change and make political action effective.

The type of theatre born in the late 1960s in North America and Europe, which was described using words such as 'guerrilla', 'instant' and 'impromptu', was for purposes of agitation, and was thus in fact a very mild form of political theatre. Even though such performances at that time were in themselves a form of social or political action, and despite the results they achieved, they were in no way 'revolutionary theatre', that is, theatre in support of social revolution.

> "Social revolutions have been rare but momentous occurrences in modern world history. From France in the 1790s to Vietnam in the mid twentieth century, these revolutions have transformed state organizations, class structures, and dominant ideologies. They have given birth to nations whose power and autonomy markedly surpassed their own prerevolutionary pasts and outstripped other countries in similar circumstances. (...)

> Social revolutions are rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures; and they are accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below. Social revolutions are set apart from other sorts of conflict and transformative processes above all by the combination of two coincidences: the coincidence of societal structural change with class upheaval; and the coincidence of political with social transformation (...). What is unique to social revolution is that basic changes in social structure and in political structure occur together in a mutually reinforcing fashion. And these changes occur through intense socio-political conflicts in which class struggles play a key role" (Skocpol 1977: 3-5).

According to Hudson (1971: 100-101), revolutionary theatre should serve these changes in social structure, supporting them by creating new, revolutionary forms of theatre freed from the restrictions of feudal or capitalist society, and whose style and content relate to the needs and creative possibilities of a proletarian or socialist or libertarian society. It should help to develop and propagate concepts and examples of new social relationships and attitudes, and it should find 'theatrical experiences which will help develop the new socialist or liberated man'.

Examples of revolutionary theatre can be found in the theatrical histories of France, Russia, Mexico, China[4], Indonesia, Cuba, Vietnam[5], Iran and Nicaragua[6]. Prerevolutionary theatre, also called 'theatre of resistance', or 'liberation theatre'[7], can be seen in a number of Latin American countries, including Chile under Pinochet[8] and also in South Africa[9], and the Philippines under Marcos. Prerevolutionary theatre is therefore theatre that supports the organized struggle against social inequality and injustice and against social repression. It does not matter if it is still too early to say whether the conflict in question will resolve itself into a new state system in which the class struggle becomes a permanent political feature.

5.3. The re-emergence of popular theatre in the North Atlantic world in the 1960s and 1970s

The North Atlantic post-war generations which had no real experience of the Second World War and which therefore rebelled against certain aspects of the restoration, such as the arms race, the anti-communist frenzy, the wars in the colonies, etc. created a social and intellectual stir in the 1960s which was felt mainly in the major cities. These social developments did not leave the theatre undisturbed. On the one hand there were groups such as the hippies, the political radicals, thepacifists, and the activists fighting for equal rights that rejected dominant lifestyle. They thought that the theatre should take more of a stand on social issues. On the other hand there was a handful of professional theatremakers, in New York and San Francisco for example, who rebelled against the standard theatrical in-crowd and its dependence on commercial interests. Disillusioned with this uncontroversial sort of theatre they started performing *avant-garde* plays in coffee houses like La Mama Experimental Theatre Club and Caffee Cino.

Several names have been given to these new movements in American theatre. Sainer (1975) speaks of 'radical theatre', Oatman (1983: 41) of 'alternative theatre', and theatremakers themselves usually speak of 'experimental theatre'. Although there were two different impulses to start with - social groups that wanted to use theatre to publicise their ideas, and directors who rebelled against the dictatorship of the official playhouses - these two initiatives influenced each other and blended in such a way as to become hardly distinguishable. Both radical and experimental theatre were aimed at activating the audience, persuading people to change their behaviour and to become more involved in what was going on both inside and outside the theatre.

Forms of activating or action-oriented theatre were created which were strongly reminis-

cent of 'agitprop'. These were called 'instant theatre', 'impromptu theatre' or 'guerrilla theatre'. According to Ronny Davis (1972: 111), who led the San Francisco Mime Troupe in the 1960s, guerrilla theatre 'constitutes a break with bourgeois theatre.' Small groups of players put on 'acts', improvising on social themes without any elaborate use of scenery, costumes, lighting, etc. This gave the players a high degree of mobility, especially when performing in public places. The actors could even mingle with the audience. But in no way was this provocative theatre, with an aggressive attitude towards the audience. Authorities and officials did not appreciate it, however, when performers showed their audience how to use parkingmeters without paying, for example. The brief sketches, which could be performed anywhere, were playful and meant to be surprising.

With such techniques as 'the happening', a group such as the Yippies was engaged in a sort of clandestine persuasion. One of their 'acts' was to toss dollar bills in the air in front of the New York stock exchange so that the public could see stockbrokers literally grabbing for money. But even these were in no way intended as revolutionary; they were not used systematically to bring about political change. This becomes immediately apparent in the 'Yippies' choice of an ideological model: the clown, acrobat and brilliant satirist Lenny Bruce. At their most extreme, these forms of theatre infiltrated demonstrations or other public gatherings in order to provoke a public confrontation[10].

Radical theatre was different; its aim was to defend the interests of a particular target group. In its early days in 1965 and 1966, Teatro Campesino with its acts supported the strikes of Mexican migrant workers in California, which were organized by the National Association of Agricultural Workers (NFWA). The explicit purpose of the performances was to encourage the workers to discuss their situation and get angry enough to want to change it. The characters in the social satires had to be identifiable individuals. Signs were even hung around the actors' necks saying 'worker' or 'union leader' to make sure the audience got it right. The work of Teatro Campesino[11] was incorporated directly into the trade union's action programmes in order to stimulate discussion about negotiations.

According to Shank (1977: 11), all of these American groups wanted to set themselves apart from the social establishment and its theatre. Certain characteristics of bourgeois theatre, such as realism, psychological characters, 'method acting' and intellectualism were considered to be pretentious, hypocritical and anti social. These theatremakers thought that inside the theatre an 'open dialogue' should be created between performer and audience through audience participation, and outside the theatre between the makers and the public at large. In their attempt to set themselves apart from the establishment both in society and within the theatrical world, the makers of political theatre needed to look for their theatrical basis 'outside realism'. This basis was sought not only in the ideas of a dramatist such as Brecht, but also in popular forms of entertainment, such as *commedia dell'arte*, circus, clowning, juggling, minstrel shows, puppet shows, popular music, carnival side shows and vaudeville.

Nonetheless, by keeping the performance open to improvisation, efforts to create a feeling of community between performers and audience resulted in new ideas about theatre. The focus 'on the immediacy of the moment, of performers and spectators being together in the same place and the same time'(Shank 1974: 112) was important for the two-way communication which enabled the performer to give direct response to the audience or to the situations that were created in the immediate area during the performance. This change in the social and intellectual climate in the late 1960s was felt not only in the United States but also in Europe.

5.4. The collective and participatory approach

Latin American theatre in the 1960s and 1970s was influenced not only by Brecht but also

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by the rise of what was described above as North American politically oriented *avant-garde* theatre. Initially, this influence was strongest in Central America, where the first reports were heard about the successes in minority and migrant theatre among Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in the United States (Dominguez 1978: 26). Mexican theatre was influenced by the *chicano* theatre performed by Teatro Campesino and by Teatro Colectivo de Albuquerque (Martinéz 1978:371-380).

According to Van Duin (1982: 23), it is not surprising that the poet and playwright Bertolt Brecht was considered the grand *maestro* by many Latin American theatre groups. 'Brecht was the one who shook the passive audience out of its upholstered seats with the question: what would you do in a situation like the one on stage? He forced the spectator to think, weigh and judge, thus arriving at political insight and action.' And this is what many Latin American theatremakers of the 1970s wanted to do.

Elements from both the Small and Grand Pedagogy of Brecht were incorporated into the didactic methods and products of what was called in Latin America 'New Theatre'. Its approach is referred to as *Creación Colectiva* (collective creation), which, according to Van Duin (1983: 60), involved a series of methods for creating theatre through joint efforts, and which was a reaction against the theatre dominated by directors.

Buenaventura (1979: 215) maintains that New Theatre used this approach not so much to achieve political or social reform as to bring about a cultural revolution after the Chinese example, which would in turn serve social change. According to Leal (1978: 125-129) and Pérez (1978: 145-160), this approach was central to all informal theatre in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s.

There were differences in what various groups understood as collective effort. Some made no distinctions in terms of function, and in all phases of production work was done collectively. Other groups had rotating functions or made certain people more active in one production phase than in another. It could thus happen that a final script was written by one or two members of the group after the group as a whole had explored a situation together and then improvised on certain themes and events. Central to the 'collective and participatory' method was the use of the workshop as a didactic and an action-research tool:

> "The workshop is a way of playing around with reality, a means of examining behavior by re-ordering, exaggerating, fragmenting, recombining and adumbrating it. The workshop is a protected time/space where intra-group relationships may thrive without being threatened by inter-group aggression" (Schechner 1977: 60).

What counted, however, was the democratic way of working in which through joint effort and open discussion, a product came into being for which everyone felt responsible.

For groups like Teatro Escambray in Cuba (Hernández 1978: 441-451), Teatro Experimental de Cali in Colombia (TEC 1978: 313-370) and Teatro Libre in Argentina (Cresta 1978: 287-294), this approach developed into a full-fledged methodology or even an authentic theatrical form. As in the United States and Europe, the social and intellectual climate of the times had given rise to a search for a theatrical translation of social criticism and commitment. For these groups, theatre served above all to portray social reality and to lend support to processes of social change.

The theatrical techniques that were used were drawn in part from Brecht's ideas about alienation. Pieces of 'realistic' acting were alternated with humorous and clown-like interludes and bits of commentary; action was interrupted by the director suddenly appearing on stage and interrupting the action; actors spoke directly to the audience from the stage, or actors disguised themselves as members of the audience and then interrupted their colleagues on stage; the separate sketches which were strung together into a collage were alternated with songs that expressed in a nutshell the essence and the message of the story. This fragmentation

and alternating use of dramatic techniques had the desired effect of alternating the verbalization of the argument or message with action.

However, under the pressure of censorship, groups such as Teatro Experimental de Cali (TEC) in Colombia (Reyes 1978: 83) and Colectivo Nacional de Teatro (CNT) in Puerto Rico (Boudet 1978: 416-417) often resorted to using well-known scripts from the theatrical world repertoire. Social injustice that existed in the distant past was used as a metaphor for the current situation in that particular country. Adaptations were made through improvisation and, above all, they were made collectively. Any elements that pointed too clearly to the current situation were antedated to the time in which the script was set. Design elements were drawn preferably from the rich and dynamic popular culture of Colombia or Puerto Rico in order to make the performance as relevant as possible to the world in which the audience lived (Reyes 1978: 85-89).

5.5. After the revolution: theatre in Cuba

There is no other socialist country, according to Van Duin (1983: 13-14), in which theatre had such an important function in the post-revolutionary period as in Cuba. During the period prior to the revolution theatre was important too, for example in the activities of the Socialist People's Party. As far back as the 1920s the University of Havanna had a major influence on social events and on art. In 1923, according to Miranda (1976: 8-9), a reform was introduced which was designed to bring the university closer to the people. The university became the centre of the campaign against illiteracy, and the José Marti People's University was founded, which offered evening courses to adults. Young intellectuals affiliated with the university in that same year founded the Cuban communist party and put forward a new set of political and aesthetic principles, which also touched on the role of theatre.

Miranda (1976: 14-15) and Van Duin (1983: 27) report that in 1943 progressive actors and directors gathered in the Teatro Popular. Between then and 1946 they worked for the Socialist People's Party and the trade unions, putting on agitprop performances in local communities, factories and union halls. These were focused on contemporary national and international issues. They also performed socially critical plays from the world repertoire, and modern Cuban plays about exploitation by landowners and factory directors.

In 1957 Vincente Revuelta, director of Teatro Estudio, returned to Cuba from France, where he had learned a great deal about socialism and Marxism while working under Jean Vilar in the National People's Theatre. 'Shortly before the revolution, in 1958, eight actors had founded Teatro Estudio, and, which was very daring for that time, they wanted it to be a genuine national theatre, as stated in a clandestine manifesto. (...) In 1959 - the revolution was brand-new - they publish a second manifesto explaining the need for a militant theatre' (Van Duin 1983: 29-30)[12]. In the second manifesto it was made clear that theatre had to serve the continued revolutionary struggle and had to be recognized and supported by the State. This required facilities for training new theatrical cadres. Theatre should not only represent the country overseas, but should also have meaning for its own people. Given the fact that for the State 'the people' meant the proletariat (peasants, factory workers and agricultural labourers), the theatre should be militant: i.e., it should support the State regime and the class struggle on a permanent basis. Conflicts in Cuban socialist society should form the basis for the theatre.

According to Van Duin (1983: 10-11), the following genres can be distinguished in contemporary post-revolutionary Cuban theatre: classic theatre, such as Teatro Estudio, which presents plays from the world repertoire and from what is called experimental theatre; New Theatre (Teatro Nuevo), a movement that began in 1968 with the Escambray group and has since grown into a leading theatrical movement in Latin America; marginal theatre, such as Grupo Político Bertolt Brecht, which makes theatre concerned with the problems of the

second generation of post-revolutionary Cubans or about the drop outs from the revolution; and lastly, Afro-Caribbean theatre, of which Cabildo Teatral de Santiago is a prime example. This incorporates into its repertoire the many cultural influences that have been felt in the Caribbean area over the centuries. These genres overlap, and all strive to be authentic Cuban forms of theatrical expression, which explains the growing Cubanisation of the international repertoire.

In the early 1960s, immediately after the revolution, there was a new generation of playwrights and theatremakers who began to describe and portray the problems that accompanied the revolution, such as those of marginal groups in society, and the drop outs from socialist society. But the repercussions were felt in the second half of the 1960s. Most of the world was in turmoil and there was a general feeling of dissatisfaction among theatremakers. In December 1967 a national theatre congress was attended by more than 1000 theatre people, including critics, teachers, amateurs and students. The theme was the social function of the national culture and of drama. The revolutionary function of drama during the fight for freedom in Vietnam was mentioned frequently. To quite a few Cuban artists, it was only the Cheo Theatre right behind the front lines in Vietnam that made truly revolutionary theatre. With such examples in mind, the Cuban theatremakers asked themselves: What kind of drama are we producing? How and for whom are we doing it? What should be the theatremaker's attitude towards society?

For these theatremakers it was not enough just to change the repertoire. They were looking for a form of theatre that could support development and the transformations introduced by the revolution. Theatre could no longer be used as an end in itself - the presentation of performances - but, according to Sedley (1979: 186), should rather be thought of as an instrument to serve the revolution. A list was made of the regions in Cuba that were most deprived in terms of both theatre and development. The proletarian neighbourhoods of Havanna were seen as virgin territory, but nonetheless attention was turned first to the countryside. This was where people had never been given the opportunity to become acquainted with the new national culture, and it was also here that the post-war hardships were felt most keenly. It was often the peasants who suffered economically from the revolution, without ever knowing why.

In 1968, 12 actors and actresses from various professional theatre groups left Havanna for the remote Escambray hills '(...) to make theatre for and about the peasants, and about the changes which the revolution brought to the lives of peasants'(Van Duin 1983: 38)[13]. For Escambray Theatre to go to work there, a region had to meet three criteria:

1) a population that was stable enough to ensure the continuity of the work, and with which it was possible to establish systematic contact
2) a region in which there had actually been an economic transformation, which had been accompanied by the inevitable conflicts and misconceptions about the revolution and
3) preferably an area with an authentic historic past (Petit 1978: 71-72).

The problem which faced the Escambray group immediately was a lack of information about the identity, history and development of the various regions and communities in the Escambray hills. They had to begin from scratch. And they had no choice but to start by conducting basic sociological research among the population in the area in which they were working.

Often assisted by a social scientist, the group used open-ended interviews, group discussions and even door-to-door visits to collect a wealth of raw data consisting of stories, opinions and anecdotes. This was the only way to find out which themes would be interesting enough to the local population to make them worth putting on stage. From this research the Escambray Theatre was able to identify the various social problems in the villages, such as antagonism towards rural teachers and towards women who worked on the land, the lack of spare time, and the effects of radical education on the development of young people. Other problems

concerned the still influential, although counter revolutionary, Jehovah's Witnesses in the region, and the differences between the agricultural labourers who worked on state farms and the *campesinos* who worked their own land.

Once the members of the Escambray Theatre group had become familiar with the population, doubts arose about their original objectives: to raise the cultural level of the people, and to create polemic plays in which old ideas are confronted by the new ideas of the revolution. Not that they abandoned these objectives. The polemic plays were performed, and were given an enthusiastic reception by the local population. But in the early 1970s, according to Benglesdorf (1973: 10), recognition grew among members of the group 'that if the Escambray Theatre represents a sort of 'cultural foco', it is a transitionary form; it is part of the struggle to achieve a communist society, rather than an institution of that society.'

This recognition, according to Tunberg (1970: 54-55), resulted in three clearly defined programmes, which were carried out simultaneously:

1) visits of about one week to various isolated rural communities, where action research would reveal more about the main problems in the villages, followed by theatrical performances for children and adults to give the rural population a different and more educated view of Cuban society

2) Operation Topes: workshops and performances during the rainy season which would acquaint the thousands of students, staff members and workers associated with the Topes schools[14] with the new and revolutionary ideas about Cuban culture

3) more general political theatre programme that resulted in performances in which ideas from before and after the revolution were compared, and local problems were placed within the context of national Cuban development.

'Straight' theatre was never used at all in this set-up. Dramatic styles were alternated in the performances, the serious story line was repeatedly interrupted by comic interludes, and performances generally ended with questions addressed to the audience so that the play developed into a discussion between actors and spectators. The production and the discussion together formed an event that was socio-political and above all cultural. This 'open' form of conducting anddesigning theatre gave the audience the right to veto the image offered by the theatre, to criticize or to accept it, to discuss it and to correct it.

Throughout the 1970s the Escambray Theatre was always ready to adapt its objectives to the changes it perceived in Cuban society. This is apparent in the choice of themes for its performances, which were meant to appeal to the general Cuban public, and also in its growing recognition of differences between target groups. Productions were put together which initially appealed neither to the general public nor to the state officials. Two examples were *Ramona*, which is clearly meant to reveal the ambiguity of the role assigned to women in post-revolutionary Cuban society, and *Los Novios*, which explores the conflict between the older and younger generations in their views about sexuality and marriage.

Although the group's methods for making productions were strongly collective, there was always room for the expertise of individuals within or from outside the group. What was present in every performance, however, according to Parmalee (1982: 21), was that the audience was never offered a ready-made solution to a problem. A performance was always open-ended: designed rather to stimulate discussion with the audience rather than to put forward definite answers. This stimulation to dialogue was mainly due to the construction of the performance and the role given to the audience.

5.6. Final remarks

Thus, at the end of the twenties, theatre as a learning tool was explicitly reintroduced into the industrialized world by Piscator and Brecht. Since that time, educative theatre on the one hand has aimed to provide the audience with an insight into social structures, while on the other, it has aimed to present possibilities to change these structures. This implied that any theatre group or company whose objectives were to address their audience with a direct educative message, was to have its own view of society.

The choice of performing in a playhouse or in the open influenced the kind of audience that was attracted, the style of acting and the staging. In cultures or countries where the theatrical tradition strongly favoured performing in official playhouses, as was the case in Japan, travelling shows performed in tents set up in public places. These performances were very much frowned upon by the authorities. Within the European or African theatrical tradition, open-air performances or concerts are not necessarily politically unsettling. But in Japan, the 'political' Black Tent Theatre[15] deliberately chose to perform in a mobile tent so that it would be recognized as 'political theatre' with respect both to the Japanese theatrical tradition and to Japanese society at large.

What was generally referred to as political theatre therefore depended on the one hand on the explicit attitude of the theatre maker, on whether he openly claimed to be making 'political theatre', and on the other hand on the state and the regime, which labelled certain theatrical forms as 'politically unacceptable'. Nevertheless, if we look at the political role of theatre in society, we should not overlook the autonomous functioning of the theatrical tradition as such. Granted, developments in the theatrical tradition cannot be divorced from broader developments in the society in which that tradition is embedded, but these developments within a theatrical tradition are still autonomous to some extent and follow their own laws.

There was a trend for bringing art to the people. Theatre stepped outside the large playhouses. The environment formed an important part of the scenery. Drama moved to public places, from railway stations to the street itself. The first aim was to try to integrate the space of performance into the performance itself and make optimal use of it. This was called 'environmental theatre'. The second aim was to break the cold, impersonal atmosphere of the city; the city should be made liveable again. A third aspect of this trend was a certain romantic nostalgia for the past, particularly the Middle Ages, and an interest in living conditions in contemporary 'exotic' cultures. It was imagined that in our own past and in distant cultures there was a sort of naive freedom with unlimited, uncensored popular theatre in the street, much the same as was also imagined for the Third World.

In the following three chapters we will discuss several case studies. The three case studies not only represent three different continents (Asia, Latin America and Africa), but also present a thorough impression of the historical development of 'theatre for development' as a special type of popular theatre. The case study on Indonesia will deal with one popular performing genre on the island of Java, namely wayang theatre which has an outstanding and well documented history. The second case study will deal with the history of popular theatre in a Latin American country: Mexico. Finally, the last case study will deal with popular theatre envolving into 'theatre for development' in Africa. The Indonesian and Mexican cases are examples of diametrically opposed approaches in the use of popular theatre within adult education. In the former case, an existing information infrastructure of campaign activities was used in the seventies, without any attention to the provision of an organizational infrastructure with which to implement a permanent follow-up. In the latter approach the initiators started with building local organizational infrastructures in order to stimulate the communities

to transform the information into action. In Indonesia the use of theatre was based on a 'top-down' development model; in Mexico a 'bottom-up' model was used.

The use of popular theatre to comply with the emotions and opinions of the audience, was first experimented with in Africa in the early seventies under the name 'theatre for development'. Initially taken by the Universities of Zambia and Botswana to bring theatre to the people. It is difficult to define 'theatre for development'. Because, the government has one view, the theatre maker another and, finally the decisive appreciation of theperformance (and thus the educative impact) rests with the audience.

Initiatives to 'theatre for development' have usualy been taken by a professional training college or a university. What was needed in this context were specially relevant theatre forms for educative purposes, and this is where attention came to be concentrated. The departments of 'Performing Arts' and/or 'Adult Education' would require its students as part of their training to join popular theatre performances and seminars. Student groups would there after head for the countryside where they performed plays, each with a message based on a socio-cultural problem they had encountered in the communities. These groups of performers were sometimes entirely made up of students, and sometimes they worked in close co-operation with the staff of adult education or literacy projects or with other front-line workers.

Part Two

From Traditional to Popular Theatre: Historical Case Studies from Asia, Latin America and Africa

VI.
Traditional Media for Publicity and Information Campaigns: Wayang Theatre on Java and Bali

In South and Southeast Asia, the theatre has developed along three lines: an indigenous or folk tradition, a court tradition and, later, the popular tradition. Indigenous theatre dates back to ancient times and was intricately interwoven with religious ritual. Court theatre was practised from the 10th to the 20th century. With the advent of the great religions of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam, royal courts were established which hired musicians, puppeteers players, dancers and actors. Popular theatre on the other hand was chiefly a 20th century product. Folk, court and popular theatre have deeply influenced one another, but to this day lead independent lives. Popular theatre like *ludruk*, *ketoprak* or *legong* are in fact the urban heirs of the rural performing arts and the court theatre, sometimes mixed with western theatrical influences.

Throughout the centuries, *wayang* theatre on Java and Bali has always been closely associated with the views and ideals of the leading religious powers or secular political elite, whether Hindu kings, Moslem saints or Central Javanese princes. 'For centuries it has been the most popular performance and has remained so till the present day' (Zoetmulder 1967: 19). Performances were almost always given in honour of some event that has a ritual or ceremonial meaning for a part of the population.

Wayang normally took place in conjunction with *selamatan* (festive meals signifying ritual sacrifice), which are held at weddings, circumcisions, exorcisms and sometimes to mark the seventh month of pregnancy or the ritual purification of the village *(bersih desa)*.

> "The *selamatan* is (...) designed to establish a sacred union. It also seeks *gotong-rojong*, a spirit of communion or harmony among the participants, as well as harmony with the spirits and with the cosmos. (In a more mundane sense, *gotong-rojong* means working together on village projects)" (Sievers 1974: 4).

Because of his socio-religious power the *dalang*, or wayang director, is respected within the communities of the *rakjat*, or common people, constituting ninety percent of the population, of which the vast majority consists of peasant villagers, the *petani*.

The word wayang has various meanings. It is used to refer to a play that is performed with either human performers or puppets, but it is also used to refer to the puppets themselves. For many people there is a strong association between the word wayang and the central Javanese shadow theatre, but the latter is in fact only one of the many forms of wayang. In terms of the stories depicted, the most important division within wayang is between *wayang purwa* and *wayang cepak*. In wayang purwa the stories are derived from the classic Hindu sagas *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. The stories of wayang cepak are not as old. They can be subdivided into *wayang madya*, in which the stories are based on the history of the most

recent Hindu dynasties on Java, and *wayang gedok*. The latter uses the stories of Prince Panji and of Damarwulan, and other stories from the later Hindu period, such as the Menak series, which is assumed to be related to the coming of a new religion: Islam. Wayang cepak probably dates back to the beginning of the 16th century (Buurman 1980: 11).

Both *wayang kulit* and *wayang golek* are 'feudal' Javanese performing arts that are still popular everywhere, from the most remote corners of the countryside and urban slums to the highest circles of the court and government. Wayang kulit - the shadow theatre with flat puppets cut from leather - is popular in Central and East Java. Wayang golek, with its round hand puppets cut from wood is popular in West Java. These two wayang forms play an equally important role in each of the regions. They were, and still are, performed on religious and ceremonial occasions both 'at court' and in rural communities. The dalang occupied a highly respected position in society, not only because he knew and related the old epic stories, but also because a certain socioreligious power was ascribed to these stories.

In West Java, with its strict version of Islam, wayang golek played an important role in keeping alive Brahmanic and animistic beliefs. In wayang golek, which is performed with three-dimensional puppets, no screen is used, so that it is not a shadow play. Wayang golek purwa is limited to West Java (Sunda). According to Buurman (1980: 15), it is derived from *wayang golek cepak*, the earliest documentation of which dates from the 15th century. It is possible that the golek puppets were used in Indonesia two centuries before that. At that time the repertoire probably consisted of semi-historical epic poems such as those describing the adventures of Prince Panji, which are also performed with masks or as shadow plays. After the coming of Islam, other stories were included in the repertoire, including stories that are presumed to be of Persian origin: the Amir Hamzah stories, and the stories of Moslem saints in Arabia and on Java. The initiative to act out stories derived from the Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata with wayang golek puppets came from the courts of West Java, and predates the initiative to depict Panji stories, for example, with these golek puppets. Wayang golek is thus Hindu in origin and reflects values that date back to before the coming of Islam. But since the middle of this century, these deeply religious and philosophical plays are performed with less and less frequency.

According to Ras (1976: 57 and 66), for as long as wayang theatre has been performed in Indonesia, there has been a clear-cut difference between the less educated dalangs in rural communities and the more sophisticated court dalangs. The 'folk' dalangs, who had to spend part of their time farming, tended to have a more limited repertoire than the court dalang. Ras (1976: 76) also pointed out, however, that it is not so much the content of a story that appeals to the public as the idiosyncratic interpretation given to it by the dalang. Dalang A is liable to be preferred over dalang B because he tells the story better or gives it a different twist from dalang B. A dalang is thus a special sort of solo artist who provides a very specific form of entertainment.

6.1. Wayang and the legacy of changing worldviews

The dalang is someone who has acquired the knowledge and skills one must have in order to perform wayang. Traditionally, the 'trade' so to speak was usually handed down from father to son. Acquiring the knowledge and skills meant more than just mastering the theatrical techniques. This was partly because of the value that wayang had within Javanese society, and partly because of the role the dalang played within the community. It was a culturally determined world view which the dalang acted out in his performances.

> "We are confronted with a mixture of terminology, Arabic as well as Sanskrit (Indian) in origin, but very often indigenous too, as if layer has come over layer, going back through Islamic and Indianized time to what was before that, amalgamated, adapted

so as to fit into the world view that existed already and remained essentially the same" (Zoetmulder 1967: 18).

That world view was neither abstract nor static. Changes in the world view were reflected in the performances, and the dramatic structure allowed for this. The relationship between the dalang and the audience can also be seen to resemble the relationship between teacher and pupil, between elder and younger brother.

The dalang and his musical ensemble formerly led a much more wandering existence than they do now. They used to travel from village to village looking for invitations to give a performance. Before a dalang began giving his show he had thoroughly appraised himself of the local situation. He made sure he was well informed about the latest news, the mood with respect to the powers-that-be, rivalries within the village, etc. He used this information to adapt his performance to the audience. This gave the play something very personal without the dalang having to mention people by name. Through the characters of the clownlike servants, who are permitted to say anything in their apparent foolishness, the local situation could be made fun of, and the audience were made to laugh at the clever depiction of the truth.

"At a time when newspapers were unknown and radio did not exist, the chatter of the jesters in a wayang performance was a very important source of news. The spectators also learned about events outside the village and matters of national importance. (...) This function of the dalang - to impart information - has survived to the present day" (Veldhuisen - Djajasoebrata 1973: 117).[1]

The wayang play or *lakon* is mostly on record in brief sketches which render the essence of the scenes in the story. During the play the director-cum-story-teller, the dalang, fills in the details of the scene. The mythical principal characters of the stories may be represented by puppets or by actors. Anderson-Benedict (1965: 6) pointed out that in the eyes of western man, wayang has been reduced to a morality play. In fact, wayang is a great deal more than a representation of the conflict between good and evil (Pandawa brothers and the Korawa brothers), between order and chaos, etc., although this is the way in which it is often presented and understood.

"The good heroes have bad traits and some of the 'bad' Kurawas are good people; what matters is that each behaves according to his social role. But these roles are so diverse that most people can pick their own favourite hero with whom to identify" (Buruma 1984: 35).

Apart from their literary and social function in the traditional Javanese society of the monarchy, the *babad* - court chronicles from which many wayang stories are derived - also served to lend legitimacy to the prince or dynasty that was in power.

To illustrate this briefly, I draw on an example of Peter Carey (1977: 15-27), who made an outstanding study of the chronicles around the Javanese 'divine king' and Moslem leader Dipanegara (1785-1855). Dipanegara, known for his leading role in the Javanese war against the Dutch colonizers (1825-1830), wrote among other things his own biography called *babad Dipanegara*, in which he legitimised his power as feudal prince by placing his own origins in genealogical line of mythical heroes well known through the wayang.

According to the Javanese belief-system, these mythical heroes in turn are descended directly from the gods. In his own chronicles and also in the chronicles that his opponents wrote about him, Dipanegara is compared to heroes in the wayang such as Arjuna. He compares the Javanese war on the one hand with the holy war of Islam, and on the other hand with the *barata-yuddha* war in the Hindu *Mahabharata* epic.

"For Indonesia we observe in this way the development of (...) consecutive new myths, which (...) continue one another. Already the expectations concerning Dipanagara were built up of elements of different origins" (Locher 1956: 189).

These expectations, concerning a coming revolution were retrospectively projected into the national freedom fight of the historical hero Dipanagara, and became a symbol of the post-war precursors of the struggle of Indonesians for national liberation.

6.2. The general educative and missionary value of wayang in colonial and pre-colonial times

For centuries wayang has functioned as a means of publicising national policies. Wayang madya and wayang gedok were created for this particular purpose, they drew their themes from East Java. Wayang tengul and wayang menak glorified the era of the Islamic conquest; wayang kuluk told the story of the princedoms of Jogjakarta and wayang dupara of Surakarta; wayang wahana depicted social problems of the times. And finally, wayang jawa told the history of Java, including the Javanese war against colonial domination by the Dutch. Here the national hero Prince Dipanegara of the Court of Jogjakarta played a major role (Mylius 1962).

Hadisoeseno (1955), Mylius (1961, 1962), Anderson-Benedict (1965: 24-25) and Wickert (1982: 55-76) have all pointed out the instructive, informative and persuasive value of wayang theatre on Java and Bali. They say that from its inception to the present day, this type of theatre provides both formal and informal instruction on ethical, aesthetic, religious and political matters. According to Mylius, ethical instruction is most prominent in *purwa* stories. Good and evil are clearly represented in symbols. The best known illustration of this is the fact that the puppets representing 'good' are placed in the horizontal banana-tree trunk to the right of the dalang, while the puppets that stand for 'evil' are placed to the left of the dalang. Since at a traditional wayang performance the audience sits both in front of and behind the dalang, 'good' and 'evil' became relative. What for one group is on the left, is on the right for the other group.

All forms of wayang, but particularly wayang kulit with its richly decorated and coloured leather puppets, served to educate the audience aesthetically (Mylius 1962: 599). At each performance the audience was once again confronted with the aesthetic values of Javanese ancient society, since every ornament, colour and form of the faces, noses and eyes followed strict symbolic codes.

The introduction to this chapter mentioned how strongly wayang theatre in Hindu times was interwoven with the dominant socio-religious and philosophical themes of Hinduism. With the coming of Islam in the 17th century, wayang was adapted to accommodate the Moslem rulers along the lines ofits earlier history. The first Moslem sultan of the Kingdom of Bintara, Shah Alam Akbar I, had wayang modified so that Islamic principles shone through the apparently Hindu exterior. In about 1940, a new wayang form emerged from the mystical Moslem sect Adam Ma'rifat, near Magelang. The leader of this movement, Resi Dwidji Siswojo, designed new wayang figures, which he added to the old purwa figures. He called the stories wayang Ma'rifat *racut* stories.

Christianity also tried using its own version of wayang in the mid-1950s for propagating the faith. Taking advantage of the value of wayang for teaching ethical values, catholic missionaries arranged that a number of bible stories be told. These concentrated on the old testament and the birth and life of Jesus Christ (Ras 1976:73). On Central Java the Protestant church organized performances of *wayang Jusuf*, which told the story of Joseph and his brothers. Ancient two-dimensional Egyptian art provided inspiration for the decoration of the puppets (Djajasoebrata 1977: 14).

Getting together the *wayang wahyu* - the 'holy' or 'blessed' wayang was the private

initiative of the Archbishop of Semarang, Monseigneur Albert Sugijapranata, S.J. Eleven wayang puppets were made by J.O.H. Padmaseputra, who saw it as an experiment. Wayang wahyu was also known in Jogjakarta. There a series was produced by the painter Marquono Bonifatius. Why an adapted form of wayang in Catholic Central Java? From the standpoint of Christianity, what was involved here was an adoption of non-Christian customs that were not too far removed from regular church customs. The Archbishop referred to above started, for example, by using the *gamelan* in the mass (Mylius 1961: 103).

This wayang form makes a break with the old figures from wayang purwa. These could not be adapted to Christianity. The wayang figures in wayang wahyu thus represent characters from the world of Christianity, the old and new testament, Adam and Eve, the angel Gabriel, etc. According to Mylius (1961: 103 104) wayang wahyu was no longer performed as a shadow play. Therefore the oil lamp *(blenjong)* disappeared from the stage. Nonetheless, in the structure of the plot and in the stage design, elements on wayang purwa have been adopted. For example, the *gunungan*, the tree of life, became the tree in the Garden of Eden. The good figures were still on the right side of the dalang, and the bad figures on the left. The main ornaments worn by the angels resemble the ornaments of the wayang purwa (Mylius 1961: 103).

6.3. Wayang suluh and wayang perdjuangan resisting colonial rule and supporting the Indonesian struggle for independence

In 1947, the intellectual vanguard of freedom fighters thought they could take advantage of the Javanese people's love of wayang theatre. At the Badan Congress Pemuda in Madiun (East Java) in 1947, the staff of a youth organisation took the initiative of using traditional wayang performances as a means of informing the general public - at that time largely illiterate and certainly without radios - about the reasons for the struggle and its aims. The idea was to acquaint the public with the leading figures on their own side, and on the side of the opposition. The first puppets fabricated for this purpose were primitive and lacked the appeal of the traditional figures. They were realistic representations of actual people such as Sukarno, Nehru, Hatta, Van Mook, Schermerhorn, soldiers and Red Cross nurses. The figures were cut out of leather or cardboard, and the faces were sometimes photographs cut out of the newspaper (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebrata 1978: 118).

The Indonesian Ministry for Information experimented with the use of wayang during the revolution (1945-1949) while the nationalist government was looking for a way to win the support of the people. The conventional mass media - radio, film and the press - were in the hands of the Dutch. There was no alternative but to turn to wayang as a traditional and widespread form of expression through which the rural population couldbe informed about the policy of the government. Wayang suluh puppets were flat puppets, like those of wayang kulit, but without perforations. They were painted in a realistic way. The puppets told stories about the national leaders and the guerrilla fighters in their struggle for independence. Wayang suluh was ideal for this purpose. The Dutch ran the cities, but the countryside was under the control of the nationalists. With just a flat package of puppets one could easily slip out of the city to the surrounding villages and perform short plays about the struggle against the Dutch. It was 'instant theatre' because Dutch forces could appear on the scene at any time. The Dutch were always trying to track down these people's dalang, mostly students or soldiers, who were known to possess the power of wayang.

Wayang suluh (torch) thus served to throw light on the Indonesian struggle for independence. It was an attempt to make more institutionalised use of the 'revolution' wayang that arose spontaneously during the struggle for independence. It could now become a way of informing the public about the birth of a nation. From the beginning, the main purpose of this form of wayang was to educate the public to national democratic policies. Wayang suluh

told the story of the revolution from 1945 to 1948. It took a long time before wayang suluh evolved into a coherent series of specific stories. The few dalang who performed wayang suluh had to put their stories together themselves. There were no models.

According to Mylius (1961: 97-98), a sort of repertoire existed only on East Java. It concentrated on

1) the history of the birth of the revolution in Surabaya and East Java, of the departure of the Japanese occupation army, of the arrival of the English, the establishment of the Indonesian Republic, the uprisings against the Dutch and the departure of the Dutch

2) the communist uprising in Madiun in 1948, the story of the government of Hatta and the trial of its leader Muso

3) Bandung conference in 1955, about the coming together of the African and Asian states

4) the establishment of the first Indonesian parliament in 1955

5) The first and second Dutch police actions in July 1947 and November 1948, about the resolutions of the UN Security Council and the recognition of the Republic of Indonesia by the Netherlands during the Round Table Conference in The Hague in 1949.

In wayang suluh, the gamelan orchestra is in an altered form. Only a *gender*, a drum and a *gong* are used, together with a guitar. According to Mylius (1961: 98) and Hadisoeseno (1955: 10) the reasons behind this are aesthetic. It was thought that the support of a full gamelan orchestra was not fitting in scenes of roaring tanks or of the new president being welcomed at the airport. Occasionally accompaniment was even provided by jazz music. Wayang suluh was performed not as shadow plays, but as puppet theatre. It is interesting that these performances were not given to mark socio-religious occasions as much as to punctuate political manifestations. Generally there was a show for children during the day, and one for adults in the evening.

It is interesting to note that there was no audience seated on the socalled shadow side of the stage. The puppets had to be seen clearly, which is why the audience generally had to sit behind the dalang. According to the old wayang philosophy, the spectators sat both in front of and behind the dalang in order to demonstrate that the truth always has two sides. It depends upon one's point of view. In the case of the liberation struggle, it is perfectly understandable that only one interpretation was acceptable and only one should be presented.

The Ministry for Information stimulated this form of wayang and organized study days for dalang. The abstract wayang figure, the Gunungan, was of course also represented in wayang suluh. The 'tree of life' was replaced by the Indonesian national symbol, with the national emblem and motto *Bineka, tunggal ika* ('Unity in Diversity') (Mylius 1961: 100).

During the turbulent times of police actions, these performances must have filled an urgent need for information. The familiar wayang theatre was enlisted in order to disseminate important political information. Portraying contemporary national political history in this way, using primitively constructed puppets and stories, was unable to hold the public's interest for long, however.

According to Djajasoebrata (1977: 15), wayang perjuangan (struggle) is related to wayang suluh, and is the creation of the painter and wayang maker from Surakarta, Raden Mas Sajid. His many sharply drawn and often witty stereotypes of Indonesians from various regions and social groups and their equally skillfully portrayed opponents, including Dutchmen and Japanese, reveal the personal commitment of this talented observer and artist in interpreting the

recent history of his country. His puppets are naturalistic and he deviates from the traditional language of symbols.

> "The plays have some 100 characters, among whom Prince Dipanegara, the hero of the Javanese war (1830-1835), 19th century Dutchmen in bright blue uniforms with ribbons and braid, soldiers of the Royal Dutch-Indian army, Japanese officers wearing spectacles, Indonesian freedom fighters, and persons from all segments of the Indonesian population. With the aid of these puppets, stories can be performed about the struggle for independence. There are bombs, grenades, rifles, arrows, a charred tree, a lectern with a glass of water for speakers, an attentive assembly from which two movable arms can be raised in protest or to interrupt. There are members of the People's Council dressed in dignified black and gold, and of course also the familiar jesters of traditional wayang theatre, in the still customary regional dress because after all it is said in Java that 'as long as the jesters are with us, nothing too bad can happen to us" (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebrata 1973: 119).[2]

Sajid drew all of these stereotypes from what he saw around him. These were the people who played a part in the drive towards freedom, as he saw them. It is interesting that with these sorts of non-traditional puppets, little attention is paid to how they would appear in shadow on an illuminated screen. Unlike the highly stylized traditional figures from the well-known epics, these puppets have almost no perforations.

Crawford (n.d.:114) illustrates how subtle political propaganda was put together in a young nation where communism was viewed as public enemy number one, by citing the following advertisement from the Jogjakarta newspaper of 6 June 1964:

> *Kresna the Ambassador*
>
> Peace or war? The answer to this question depends on the result of the meeting between the heads of state of the Pandawas and the imperialist Kurawas ...

Kresna the Ambassador is a standard work in the classic wayang kulit repertoire. It tells about Kresna, who tried to persuade the Korawas to return the Kingdom of Astina to its rightful masters, the five Pandawa brothers. He does not succeed, and the 'great war' - the Baratajuda - is the result. Apart from the modern word 'imperialist', there is nothing in this advertisement that might indicate any special significance in the play. But a glance at the other news in the papers of the period puts this advert in a whole different light. At that time the leaders of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines were meeting to discuss recognition of the Malaysian Federation, relations among the three states and territorial issues. The prime minister of Malaysia was threatening to break off all negotiations unless a number of basic conditions were met.

Two weeks earlier, President Sukarno had given a speech in which he once again spelled out the Indonesian position. He claimed to be an advocate of peaceful negotiations, but at the same time opposed the (British) imperial ists. Seen in this context, the significance of the play becomes clear. It was an allegory for Indonesian foreign policy with respect to Malaysia, very cleverly chosen to appeal to the Indonesian public. The kingdom of Astina represented the territory claimed by both Malaysia and Indonesia. Kresna's meeting with the Korawas was Sukarno's meeting with Tanku Abdul Rahman.

> "During the Confrontation with Malaysia (...) the Pendawa heroes were dressed up as Indonesians, led by Sukarno himself of course, while the Kurawas were dressed as Malaysians (Buruma 1984: 36)".

One needed only to use this allegory in order to get one's message across clearly. The techniques and the basic dramatic structure of wayang could be left completely intact.

6.4. Wayang Pantja Sila: the five national principles presented allegorically on stage

When the revolution was over in 1949, the time of wayang suluh and wayang perdjuangan was over as well (Crawford n.d.:12). Wayang theatre was nonetheless still valued as an instrument for publicising the young, independent republic, so that the Ministry for Information sought ways of making the plays more appealing. Instead of recounting recent historical events with the help of puppets in modern dress made to resemble as closely as possible real political figures, elegant puppets were created, stylized in the traditional way, and allegorically representing the five basic principles of the Republic *(Pantja Sila)* and their champions and opponents. The idea was in this way to familiarize broad segments of the population with the state philosophy.

On West Java (Sunda), wayang golek puppets were used around 1948 for disseminating information about national policies. There was, however, less deviation from the traditional wooden puppets. According to Sutaarga, no new wooden puppets were designed to depict General Spoor, for example. The dalang selected the classical themes that could best be adapted for the purpose of announcing the new national ideology of the young republic. As an example of a modern *lakon carangan*, Sutaarga (1955: 453) describes *Garuda Wahju*, which he saw performed.

The mythical bird Garuda was depicted in the emblem of the republic as a phoenix. There was a certain symbolism in the details of the bird. The spread wings had 17 feathers and the tail 8. This stood for the date of the declaration of independence on 17/8/45. There were five areas on the bird's breast representing the Pantja Sila: the *banyan* tree, the head of a steer, a star, a sheaf of rice and a chain. In this particular story the dalang related how intervention by the gods caused the five Pandawa princes to lose their power over their realms to the Korowa princes. The comical head servant Semar was the only one who could rescue the Pandawas from this difficult situation. He underwent a metamorphosis and became Garuda. His five fellow comical servants, including his sons, changed into a banyan tree, a steer's head, a star, a sheaf of rice and a chain. With this baggage on his back, he set off for the home of the gods, where he asked the supreme god Batara Guru for restitution. And he succeeded.

This story contains several mythical and historical references. The comic servants or clowns correspond in traditional wayang to the common people, and the Pandawa princes to the powers-that-be. The clown Semar according to Javanese mythology is the elder brother of Batara Guru, and therefore is entitled to demand favours of his younger brother. Thirdly, the dalang uses a play on words to make the home of Batara Guru correspond to the headquarters of the United Nations. The dalang is wanting to make it clear that if the Indonesians are to win their rights in the U.N. they must adopt the national ideology -the Pantja Sila- and must remain united in all matters. In the Indonesian emblem, after all, Garuda is gripping a banner with the words 'unity in diversity' (Sutaarga 1955: 453).

Although wayang suluh was a spontaneous response to the people's need for more insight into the Indonesian revolution, which then led to support for the first Indonesian governments, it seemed at a certain point to lose its power. In the meantime, however, the government had come to appreciate the power of wayang as an instrument for imparting government information. This is why the ministry deliberately worked on the design of an allegorical form of wayang, which could broaden the possibilities of wayang for this purpose. A form of wayang was needed that was less realistic than wayang suluh and far more closely related to wayang purwa - a wayang form in which the public could become familiar with the ideological prin-

ciples of the young nation. This had to be done not in a realistic way, but in an allegorical manner, as in the wayang purwa (Hadisoeseno 1955: 14).

During the early 1960s, Harsono Hadisoeseno developed the wayang pantja sila for the Ministry of Information as an attempt to update traditional wayang kulit while retaining its artistic form and worth. According to Javanese belief, there are 144 human passions and traits. All of these are visually represented in the puppets of traditional wayang kulit. It was therefore not too difficult to find appropriate puppets to represent the modern concepts of the Pantja Sila. The Pandawa brothers represented the five new principles of the state.

The *Pantja Sila* or 'Five Principles', are embedded in the preamble of the 1945 constitution, and continued to be the fundamental statement of the creed of the Republic (Sievers 1974: 7). The *Pantja Sila* contains the main principles of Indonesian nationalism:

1) belief in a Godhead that is One
2) nationalism
3) humanity or internationalism
4) democracy, and
5) social justice.

However, as Sievers (1974: 8) states, the Revolutionary slogans have still another dimension beyond their rational content and ideological import, namely, their mystic significance:

> "it rests in the hermetic meaning of the number five. (...) The *Pancha-sila* consists of five taboos which constitute the essence of the code of virtuous conduct for devotees of Hinayana Buddhism; while the Five Pillars refer to mandatory practices for every good Moslem."

But the number five appeals to an even deeper level of meaning of Javanese traditional religion, known as *agama Java*, going back to eighth-century Buddhist doctrines.

> "By popularising the five-point state ideology, Pancasila-portrayed more and more as if derived from indigenous values rather than as a collection of imported concepts" (Awanohara 1984: 33).

The five Pendawa brothers, who originally represented the forces of good in wayang purwa, were translated into the five basic principles of the young republic:

1) belief in God: Judistira
2) humanity: Bima
3) nationalism: Arjuna
4) democracy: Nakula
5) social justice: Sadewa.

Thus the five Pandawa brothers became the five Pantja Sila brothers. These Pantja Sila brothers were sent to earth by God with a new message: the reconstruction of the Republic of Indonesia. Each of them teaches us one Sila (Hadisoeseno 1955: 14).

Other 'good' characters in traditional terms symbolized such concepts as freedom, public health, education, agriculture, etc. The traditional demons from the wayang kulit, on the other hand, symbolized plant disease, devaluation, inflation, the loss of morals, and such hostile ideologies as feudalism, Marxism, individualism, etc. (Crawford,n.d.: 13).

In this wayang form there was of course also a place for the clowns. They very clearly represented the people. Indonesia itself was Nusantara Putra, who conquered the colonial ruler Penjakyah. The goddess Durga, wife of the god Shiwa, was retained in this form of wayang as the Destroyer, the unknown danger lurking in the background. This demon appeared in various disguises, all of which undermined the republic. The government services were also represent ed as puppets. They fought against their own demons. For example the economic

and finance departments battled such demons as inflation and corruption. Concepts from western culture, such as pragmatism, individualism and intellectualism were also personified, as were concepts derived from Marxism.

Wayang Pantja Sila therefore involved a deliberate attempt to avoid the royalist and feudal leanings of wayang purwa, while at the same time building upon its allegorical symbolism. *Vox Populi* replaces the *Vox Dei* of royal omnipotence and divine kingship. In order to make this absolutely clear in the play, kings were still depicted in wayang pantja sila. They represented the feudalism against which the republican democracy was fighting. In this way the familiar epics were used as a basis; gaps were continuously filled by new leaders (Hadisoeseno 1955: 15).

Wayang Pantja Sila was the creation of systematic, bureaucratic thinkers. The puppets were specially designed, although the traditional dalang were expected to perform the plays. After several trials, however, it seemed that the new form did not catch on with the public. Perhaps the new symbolism was too complicated for the villagers, or perhaps the professional dalang avoided us ing it because it was too closely identified with government propaganda.

One of the major changes in world view that took place between the Java in which wayang first became significant and the Java of today concerns the system of government. Old Java was made up of small states - feudal kingdoms, the Java of today is part of a republic, the Republic of Indonesia. This change had far-reaching consequences for the frame of reference from which society is viewed. However, it was in the turbulent period after the second world war that President Sukarno often used figures of speech in his political speeches that were drawn from wayang

The new form of government and state organization were not the only changes. Whereas explanations for plant diseases were once sought in traditional beliefs, the rural community was now confronted with an agricultural extension officer, trained to think 'scientifically', who presented a totally different explanation based on western rationalism, and who offered the means to get rid of the disease at its source.

This was meant to be communicated to the larger public as well. The wayang was used to this end, and has retained this function up to the present day.

> "*Dalangs* were and still are pressed to lend themselves for purposes of indoctrination: political, social and economic. This meant that, after the change of government that followed the coup d'état of 1965, propaganda had to be made against social elements that were not favoured by the new leaders. There also had to be propaganda for the *Repelita* - the five-year plan, propaganda for the use of fertilisers and pesticides, propaganda for family planning, etc." (Ras 1978: 457).[3]

According to Eapen (1974: 41), international aid organizations such as the United States Agency for International Development (AID) resorted to wayang theatre in order to promote the consumption of American wheat on Java.

Under these circumstances what does a dalang do with his traditional knowledge of plant disease? He is trapped between the esoteric knowledge for which the rural community relies on him, and the new world view that government officials expect him to disseminate. He is trapped between his power to carry out 'exorcist' rituals, which the population has always had faith in, and his ability to promote the 'magic' of pesticides. The use of exorcist rituals and of fertilizers are both customs with their own logic. But whereas the first leads to a series of expressive activities, the second calls for a technical act. It is difficult to transform the one custom into the other. 'Society may change, but belief in traditional means is resilient' (Clara van Groenendael 1982: 71)[4]. In the case of the promotion of American wheat or modern birth control devices, the dalang no longer possesses the enigma, the secret that had been condensed into his traditional knowledge of the appropriate incantation, the *mantra*.

6.5. Wayang as a means of informing the public about birth control

One of the most important things in a traditional culture in which sexuality, kinship and family life are still bound to strict cultural conventions, is to bring the subject of birth control to the attention of the public and to make it something that can be discussed. About 90 percent of the Indonesian population of Java is Moslem. For orthodox Moslems in particular anything related to sexuality is surrounded by taboos unless it falls within the prescribed rules for marriage. One of the greatest fears among orthodox Moslems is that birth control will foster permissiveness: free sexual relations and increased prostitution. They reason that if birth control devices were readily available they could be used for illegal as well as legal purposes. They think they are being asked to seek economic improvement at the price of moral and spiritual impoverishment.

'Spiritual impoverishment' is a vague concept, but one must not forget that the Javanese have their own notion of the ideal number of children. This ideal number depends not so much on one's income and purchasing power as on deeply rooted religious values and symbolism. In addition, a high birth rate was necessary to balance a high death rate. Thus the first step in the national birth control campaign, was and still is, to increase familiarity with the subject matter on both the societal and personal levels. Only then can one begin with the concrete provision of services and with the dispelling of negative responses.

Since birth control is a matter of personal choice, the persuasive powers of advertising, or - if you will - propaganda, will be directed primarily at people's motivation. Whatever the nature and scope of the message, one will choose an appealing and effective medium which is familiar to the public one is trying to reach, and which translates the message easily into their own communication codes. These media and codes can vary within a single country, depending on whether one is in the city or the countryside. Information can obviously be disseminated within an urban environment easily and on a large scale via the press. For those who cannot read there is always the radio. Things are different in the countryside, and certainly in the Indonesian countryside. The population is largely illiterate, and for them the radio is still something from another world.

Several information channels were used on Java. There were the information teams who travelled from village to village. In addition, various mass media were used, such as mobile cinema, television, radio, newspapers and traditional media. And there was the dalang - the wayang director - whose performances were used to pass on information about birth control.

> "Officialdom (...) recognized the communication gap by seeking the services of puppeteers to spread its propaganda through the shadow plays. In fact, anyone with a message to get across to the 'people' tries to capitalize on the often extraordinary talents of these professional performers. Something of an anachronism in his social setting, the puppeteer remains a part of two worlds" (Polomka 1971: 29-30).

This meant that the government first had to win over the dalang. He was given instruction, and the message was generally packaged in a short, comical play that was presented in the intermission. In a humorous way it was shown that those with just two children are better off economically than those with more children. People with few children were depicted as progressive *(maju)*, reflecting the Indonesian government's ideal for the Javanese citizen.

Another way of bringing development-related messages to the attention of the public via wayang is through the female singer, the *sinden*. Most singers included in their repertoire at least one or two songs that were written by a government agency and that dealt with topics such as reforestation or birth control (Foley 1979: 3).

In wayang kulit, the shadow play with flat puppets made of leather, the dalang, through the mouths of the clowns and in dialogue form, tells of the activities undertaken by the

government in the interests of family planning. In the most appropriate scenes in which the clowns appear, the dalang shows how the hero's burlesque companion makes advances to his girl friend. The following example, in which Twalen (Semar's Balinese counterpart) is playing the leading part, is taken from Muncie (1972:29). Twalen wants to sleep with his girl friend. But she partly calls his attention to the fact that each time he has been around, the number of her children increased by one: 'Take a look at them, they're your kids too! How am I to feed and clothe them?' The audience is amused, and the dalang rounds off this brief comic interlude by discussing the government's family planning programmes.

The wayang was used here along the lines of the wayang pantja sila mentioned earlier, but attempts were made to profit from the mistakes made then. Neither the puppets nor the stories were changed. The whole wayang was left intact. In contrast to the wayang pantja sila, no attempt was made to develop new, complicated and abstract allegories in order to explain one's point. The dalang drew from local examples, using family X and family Y to illustrate the message. This made the message reliable and straightforward, it was hoped. Of course it was recognized that these messages were not appropriate at every performance. Shows on the occasion of weddings and the seventh month of pregnancy initially seemed the best suited for communicating this sort of message. It was left to the dalang to choose the proper performance and within it the right moment for the message. Everything thus depended on the co-operation of the dalang and on the reliability of his message.

Clara van Groenendael (1982: 281-294) explains in great detail how a dalang on Central Java fitted his message about birth control into a performance in honour of the wedding of the daughter of the house. The dalang chose to present his message in one of the comic intermezzos (banjolan), a repartee between two of a prince's women servants. These are the mother Cangik and her daughter Limbuk. In this conversation, in which the daughter, as it were, is teaching the critical but not obstinate mother, the dalang chose not to address the issue of birth control directly, but to begin by arguing in favour of longer periods between children. According to daughter Limbuk, birth is an event that weakens the woman through a loss of blood. She needs time to recover.

> "At the end the theme is placed in a wider context, that is, against the background of a necessary balance between the size of the population and what the land yields, which is the main theme of the Five-Year Plan (...)" (Clara van Groenendael 1982: 287).[5]

In order to make this theme of birth control familiar and to restore the traditional relationship between wise mother and ignorant daughter, he then had the mother Cangik give an explanation of the dream of a marriagable daughter. In contrast to the previous topic, this was a subject on which mother Cangik was expert. According to Clara van Groenendael, during this intermezzo the audience paid little attention to the comments of the daughter, people drank their tea and chatted. When the mother began talking, however, the response was immediate and people nodded agreement.

Foley (1979: 4) tells how between 1974 and 1976the Indonesian Government Agency for Family Planning (BKKBN) organized training courses for dalang. These courses tended to concentrate more on the artistic side than on providing the dalang with specific instructions. In order to increase its influence, the government set up the Association of Indonesian Dalang (PEPADI) as part of the National Organization for the Coordination of the Arts in Indonesia (BKKNI). The government hoped in this way to gain more control over artists and to create greater awareness of the role of the artist in creating the New Order in the republic. Birth control was to be part of this new order.

In 1978 a contract was signed by the Indonesian Directorate for Public Education (PENMAS) and the University of Massachusetts in order to try to apply traditional media such as wayang golek in non-formal educational projects on West Java in support of technical assistan-

ce. Kathy Foley, who worked on this project, interviewed some 47 dalang, all of whom admitted to including the occasional development-oriented message in their performances, often on the topic of birth control.

All dalang most often had the development-oriented messages come from the characters of the *pawongan*, the clowns or jesters in wayang theatre. They are most suitable because within the dramatic structure of the play they are allowed the most freedom in their comical intermezzos.

> "It is through the clown-scenes that the wayang purwa can always keep up with the contemporary topics and problems, enabling it to adjust itself to the changes in society" (Guritno 1976: 134).

When Semar (the main comic servant) appears on the scene he often addresses himself first of all directly to his host in the audience. He congratulates the family or the community with its festivity. Then Semar complains that an abundance of schools is being built but that no thought has been given to the problem of maintenance costs. His son Astrajongga replies that schools areunnecessary for people as stupid as himself. Sawala scolds his brother for seeking his fortune in town and for neglecting the problem of the development of his village. Such messages, jokingly disguised in timeless mythical play, are accepted by the Sundanese people.

The Balinese birth control programme in the seventies contained three components: motivation and education, the distribution of birth control devices, and back-up services for training, finance, logistics and administration. The information programme (motivation and education) was implemented by teams that went from door-to-door giving information to families. These information officers are also from Bali and had been specially trained for this work.

From the very start of the campaign, birth control caught on in the 560 villages of Bali far more quickly than on the neighbouring island of Java. The island is small and the villages reasonably accessible, but there seem to have been other reasons for the success with which this intensive campaign was met. The main reason is that the Balinese are Hindu, and therefore there is no religious opposition to birth control, as there is on Moslem West Java.

Except for the clown scenes, all dialogue in Balinese wayang is spoken in Kawi, the language that was used in the courts of the old Hindu princes. The clown characters acted as interpreters for the public in summarizing these dialogues. The Balinese wayang performances, like the Javanese, have a fixed dramatic structure, a standard script based on traditional stories. Here too, the dalang is allowed the greatest freedom in the clown scenes, in which he brings up current affairs in the society and in the village. In an interview with Peter Muncie (1972: 29), dalang Ida Bagu Baskara told how he had been approached by someone from the public health department, who asked him to include messages about birth control in his performances: 'In almost every performance I spend about 15 minutes on the subject. Of course I don't talk about it non-stop for a full quarter of an hour. I try to limit the jokes and messages to about three or four minutes so as not to bore people.'

To give an idea of how literally a theme like birth control is acted out by the dalang in a clown scene, I have included a piece of dialogue which is borrowed from the field observations of Hinzler (1975: 37). The dialogue takes place on Bali between a prince and his two comic servants or clowns.

> "**Prince**: We are sad because a brahman took her for his wife instead of someone of her own class (...).
> Merdah: What would be the reaction if she had been chosen by a poor man? (...)
> **Twalèn**: Ah, living is working. Both the poor man and the rich man must work nowadays.

Class distinctions are unimportant. Working is good for a person, they say (...).
Merdah: I say, I heard that she is being shared by five men, the brahman and his four brothers (...).
Twalèn: If that's true, then the birth control agency has succeeded. Five men to each woman, who may have a total of four children, is better than one man with five women, each with four children (...)."[6]

The irony here is obvious. In this short fragment, fun is made of birth control at the same time that serious stimulation is given in that direction.

6.6. Final remarks

Throughout the ages, wayang has meant the mystical, ethical and aesthetic education of its audience. Moreover, the court dalang as well as the people's dalang in the *desa* handled social and political issues. And insofar as it is the most eminent reflection of Javanese ideals, wayang tells us something of the relationship between ruler and subject. That is why wayang was used on Java to voice protest against Dutch colonial rule. In this way the people were made aware of Dutch domination. Later, wayang came to be used to spread the five principles of Pantja-Sila on which the new republic was founded.

Earlier and present-day rulers of Java have both feared the traditional freedom of speech contained in wayang theatre, but nevertheless have tried to exploit that feature. Even today, dalang are pressed into service as media of political, social and economical indoctrination.

This is not to say that the entire wayang play, which usually lasted from eight in the evening until early hours of the morning, was appropriate for the expression of criticism. In this traditional drama form, the dalang is only free to handle current themes, and therefore to insert critical notes, during the *banyolan*, i.e. the humoristic scenes that are played after midnight and which feature the clowns and their master. Only during banyolan is there opportunity for comment that bears no relation whatsoever to the actual story line of the play. It is the clowns, i.e. father Semar and his three sons Pétruk, Nala Gareng and, in some parts of Java, Bagong, who are permitted to represent the voice of the current rulers or of the people in a drama that is otherwise mythical and timeless. Unfortunately says Ras (1978), soft spoken censure urges the dalang to render his clowns, the *panakawan*, more and more in general terms: burlesque, fantastic but uncritical.

Although the dialogue or the principal theme in wayang refers to everyday reality which is presented by the dalang as a problem, the performance never offers solutions of any kind. The people in the audience have to make their own analysis, their own decision as to how the problem should be solved. The same principle underlies wayang performances concerning problems of family planning.

When Foley (1979) interviewed some prominent dalang on West Java, they admitted that they had included 'family-planning messages' in their plays. They are thus not averse to spreading such messages, but how do the people react? As long as the modern message does not contaminate the form and the ritual context of the traditional medium, they will lend an attentive ear. As long as the clown does not put undue emphasis on the instructive part of his speech, the people will not turn away nor ridicule him for his seriousness. But the question remains whether the use of wayang makes a positive contribution to the development programmes undertaken by the government. The power of wayang lies chiefly in the dalang's ability to make a balanced statement on innovation; in his being permitted to illustrate the pros and cons of the programme.

According to Colletta (1975: 62), there are at least three reasons why a traditional form of theatre can be used to transmit development-related messages to the local population:

1) because as a medium theatre is already a legitimate part of the cultural tradition

2) because theatre communicates with systems of symbols that have meaning for the local population

3) because theatre performs various functions, both manifest and latent, which makes it a better medium than one with a single manifest function, such as an instructive brochure. In addition, teams of professional information officers are often total strangers to a rural community and are therefore mistrusted, whereas everyone knows the local dalang.

According to Colletta (1975: 68), in the seventies some five different ways were used to incorporate new messages into wayang performances. First, in giving information, for example, use was made of the anachronisms that the clowns traditionally pointed out in their humorous intermezzos. Secondly, subtle allegories were used so that episodes from the well-known traditional epics corresponded to contemporary events. Thirdly, rigorous modernization of both the roles and the script has been tried, and only a minimum of the artistic form retained, such as in wayang suluh. Fourthly, attempts have been made to modernize thescript while the traditional roles were retained either symbolically or allegorically, corresponding to contemporary themes, such as in wayang pantja sila. Finally, wayang has been modified by introducing into the script in an extremely subtle way new pieces of text that were not contained in the authentic stories, but that fitted in well. A person familiar with wayang gets the subliminal message, as contained in the dialogue between two gods about harmonious relations, which takes place at the moment in the story that a divine child is born. The reference to birth control is unmistakable. The ideals of contemporary society puts wayang under pressure. Dalang who were far too accustomed to talking about kings and princes are often criticized for being old-fashioned or feudal. But the opposite is also true. Dalang who become too esoteric, too political or too instructive can lose the public's favour. The dalang has to walk a fine line between tradition and modernization. He must continually adapt to the changing tastes of his audience.

VII.
Adult Education and 'Teatro Campesino' in Latin America: Mexico as an Example

The approach of adult education has, throughout the years, been subject to trend fluctuations. Up till 1950 adult education was mainly meant to provide the population of the countryside, which lacked formal education, with some basic knowledge and skills in order to prevent them from isolation from development on a national level.

'Fundamental education', is rather closely connected to a vision of development from the fifties, that of 'community development'. According to Bonanni (1977: 7) community development was seen as the mutual tuning of development activities set up by the rural communities themselves with those undertaken by the government in order to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions in the villages and to integrate these villages in the national process of development for their own ultimate benefit. The aim of 'fundamental education' as a part of rural development was to supply a kind of second chance education for adults who in the past had not had the chance to use the established educational institutions. Only in this way, it was supposed, could people in the country be taught a basic knowledge and a number of skills, through which they would be able to understand the problems in their surroundings and would be able to make an active contribution to the improvement of the living conditions in their village.

After 1950, a new tendency arose from Unesco in which adult education was no longer seen as a *douceur* but rather headed towards specific refresher courses. Yet, many still regarded adult education as second-rate education. Hence, as the result of the writings of Paulo Freire, a tendency had developed through the whole of Latin America, in the seventies, to support especially those initiatives that came from within the communities themselves. Second rate education then became second-chance education.

In Latin America, during the past fifteen years, there has come into existence from the grass roots of society an autonomous educational development which is known as popular education or, in Spanish, as *educación popular*. The most striking characteristics of popular education, according to Vio Grossi (1982: 210-212), are that it has a concrete starting point, because it works inside out and springs from popular sectors of society. It is a process in which knowledge is created because the population itself contributes to its development; it is a development aimed at action which has as its goal to change reality; it is a collective approach, not a manipulative initiative developed from above. Popular education, therefore, is of a practical nature because it consists of initiatives taken by the population to meet their own basic needs in the field of education. It is by definition non-formal education and for the greater part aimed at adults.

Educación popular aims at conscientizing repressed factions of society and at the changing of their living conditions (Barreiro 1974). Although never explicitly so, it does have political implications. *Educación popular* is a pedagogical instrument used in a process of liberation. It is counteractive to the current adult education programmes, imposed from outside, which are directed at the changing of the 'educatee' without changing the socio-political system in

which the 'student' lives (Epskamp 1982:20). *Educación popular* tries to break through this barrier by stimulating and attending initiatives at a local level, and making the local population define their own history and development. For this purpose the community needs to organize itself first, and to come to collective action afterwards. This demands a high degree of participation of the entire population.

A large number of ideas within these developments are founded on Paulo Freire's ideas. Freire's conception of conscientization and the opposition to the instrumentality of current adult education programmes is a common denominator of all *educación popular*-initiatives. Yet in various Latin American countries a variety of popular education models is employed in slums or rural communities and among marginal groups of society. *Educación popular* utilizes the minimal action of repressed communities and spontaneous initiatives. One of the aims of *educación popular*-organizations is to make the people trust their own initiatives and to translate these for them in terms of management to be presented to official institutions.

According to Vio Grossi (1982: 209) the term popular education reverts to the distinction Durkheim made at the beginning of this century between 'popular' and 'non-popular' approaches to education. Durkheim (1956: 65-66, 137) noted the ever existing tension between the conservative and transformative character of education. It is generally known that education in any society transmits operative norms and behaviour patterns in order to maintain the established social order. But, simultaneously, it is generally accepted that education is a process of renewal as well as a process of preservation of the status quo, a process to homogenize as well as to differentiate men, as it is aimed at the training of specialists.

An important characteristic of *educación popular* as described above is that it fosters and strives after the recognition of the autonomous 'popular culture' which makes for a positive revaluation of the cultural identity of those involved. People and organizations involved are made aware of the importance of native and independent forms of expression as valuable alternatives for a 'culture' introduced from the outside. Locally present culture is, therefore, used for the development of locally produced means of teaching and transference. These popular or micro media are, as opposed to the mass media, more or less in the hands of the population itself, and are used for small scale projects, are developmental and not alienating. One of these micro media is 'popular theatre' which, like radio, has the advantage of reaching the illiterate (Leis 1980: 16).

Nowadays, of more importance than 'folk culture' is the term 'popular culture', which according to Nuñez (1980: 521) refers to that culture:

> "which preserves, rescues, and incorporates elements whose content is genuinely popular - i.e. serves the interests of the popular classes. It is that culture which strengthens ethnic consciousness and class consciousness."

Western development workers, educational and communication experts have devoted relatively little attention to this development. On the one hand, this is due to their inability to discover a clear coherence within these wide spread developments. This is understandable, because the development rests on local initiatives which differ from one village to another. On the other hand, the lack of attention is due to linguistic confusion. The way in which the Spanish adjective *popular* ought to be understood differs distinctly from the obvious English translation as 'popular'.

The notion of 'popular education' is interrelated with a number of other notions such as 'popular organization', 'popular culture', 'popular participation', 'popular theatre'.

7.1. Theatre for and by the indigenous population

It was in Mexico that Robert Redfield, an anthropologist, carried out a field research which

provided him with materials to work out the concept of 'folk' culture, as described in Chapter III. Folk arts, including the performing arts take an important stand within Mexican 'folk' culture.

Viewed in historical perspective for example, 'folk arts' in Mexico can be divided into three distinct categories. The first group is that of the artifacts produced by urban folk artisans and artists, some of which have antecedents in ancient Mexico, as do the raw materials and certain manufacturing techniques. The second group is that of the native handicrafts, the products of which met the needs of the native inhabitants' life style, which was quite different from that of the Spaniards or Creole. Another important factor inthe formation of folk art was the grouping of the native populace into towns. When this was accomplished and sustained - however transitorily - the proximity of these native settlements to Spaniards and Creoles gave an impetus to the 'meztization' of folk art. That is, there was a mutual influence of one group upon the other with regard to raw materials, technology and design from the Spaniards to the Creole and on the native inhabitants. This explains the presence of such exotic figures as the mermaid or motifs reminiscent of the flora and fauna in popular art[1].

The type of theatre which still enjoys huge popularity among the rural population at a community level in Mexico is the passion plays and the religious processions connected to them, which return annually round Easter. When, with the invasion of the Spanish conquerors, the Roman Catholic missionaries began their religious *conquista* of the New World, they did so, according to Lanzilotti (1979: 2), preferably in the local language: Nahuatl, Maya, Zapotheca, Mixteca, Tarasca, etc. Today it is still these languages that, on Roman Catholic holidays, biblical stories are performed in, and that define the authentic theatre experience at the community level.

Of course there are also organized indigenous theatre companies in Mexico. The groups belonging to the Arte Escénico Popular, for example, include two companies which stem from the Purépechas, natives of Michoacán, and the Nahuatl, natives of Hildalgo. These companies form part of a government programme to promote theatre productions with social and educative value, and to maintain native traditions, in order to provide a constructive cultural understanding among Mexican people today. According to its own participants it is popular theatre, in the sense that it goes to the people, in their communities, rather than the other way round. The performances, presented in Spanish or the local Indian tongue, deal with problems that affect the lives of the audience: the plays are focused on the necessity to organize the community in order to solve common problems.

When Arte Escénico Popular started in the late1960s, the members performed plays that were already written, and took them to the rural areas. The actors were students from the national drama school, forming part of the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (INBA; Mexico DF), who worked in the fields and in the company in exchange for a small wage. But that did not work out well because these students would leave the group frequently. Ultimately, the programme was revised so that the *campesinos* (rural people) themselves were approached to make theatre for their fellow members of the community. Nowadays, Arte Escénico Popular goes into the communities to set up local groups. The people to be trained are by no means professional actors. They are amateur artists or school teachers who want to create theatre. After four months of training (music, pantomime or acrobatics) the newly formed local groups go into the communities to perform the play their members have worked on.

The drama department of the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA) not only stimulates the forementioned forms of indigenous theatre, but also maintains and promotes several puppet theatre groups. Since the Revolution of 1910, puppet theatre has served as an outstanding educative medium to be used by the governmental services as well as by non governmental organizations. INBA, one of the instigators of the use of puppet theatre, tries to promote the blending of the puppetry tradition introduced a long time ago by the conquering Spaniards, and the old native Mexican puppetry roots. INBA takes the archaeological evidence of pre-Co-

lumbian puppet theatre seriously, and stimulates the merging of the two national styles of puppetry in the works of the troupes it supports, without losing the basic characteristics of either. Since many of the plays and characterizations have a folklore basis, this particular theatrical medium is considered by INBA as an outstanding manifestation of the great renaissance in national art.

Each of the INBA-related groups gives one show a day at a state school, or in one of the local hospitals. They also make frequent tours of the provinces. INBA's puppet theatre has a wide repertory, ranging from popular or folklore pieces for children to the dramatization of the traditional *corrido* (Mexican ballad) for adults (Cueto 1965:460-462). Next to their cultural function some plays have a clear educative value as well. Roberto Lago, whose Teatro Guignol has been in existence as part of the Institute since 1933, made a special contribution to the four-year government sponsored literacy campaign in the late 1940s, in motivating Indian communities to participate in these campaigns.

One of the main characters in Lago's puppet shows during this campaign was Mr. Guignol (Mr. Puppet), a clown-faced puppet who served as one of the foremost teachers and propagandists of literacy throughout the campaign. Often when rural literacy teachers were denied entrance to backward Indian villages where reading and writing were regarded with hostile suspicion, only Mr. Guignol was able to reach the people and convince them that they had to learn for their own good (Munoz 1966). He went among them in the guise of an entertain er, a familiar one at that time, whom they welcomed with open arms.

7.2. Theatre and adult education in Mexico, from 1920 to 1950

According to Nomland (1967) there is a number of trends to be distinguished within Mexican rural theatre, such as *teatro campesino*, mass theatre and folklore theatre. In 1923 a tendency arose in Mexican theatre that is known as *teatro sintético*. It was a semi-urban development of didactic theatre which attempted to combine old customs and modern themes. These short plays were enlivened by folksong and dance, folk stories and elements of local custom. Rafael M. Saavedra, the initiator of this movement, had already shown his interest in *teatro campesino* by writing a few plays that were published in, among other magazines, *The Rural Teacher*. Towards the end of the thirties, Jesús Carranza Góntiz used the *teatro sintético*, inco-operation with the Centre of Antifascism and Social Studies (Moselin, Michoacán), to put on stage the play *Rosa, the communist*, a play that was meant to illuminate the causes of class struggle.

Besides this, popular customs in the theatre were, of course, also used for the sake of tourism, governmental or commercial purposes. Folklore theatre for the sake of tourism generally showed customs lifted out of their context. There was absolutely no authenticity and up to a certain level it was rather degrading for the original Indian population, whose existence was romanticized and mythologized. The government put a large amount of money into mass theatre, a kind of 'opera-like' plays dedicated to themes such as 'liberation', the Mexican Revolution, 'folkheroes' and Aztec and Maya leaders against the *conquista*, examples of which are *Xochilhuitl* (by Rosales), *The Cornpeople*, and *Popul Vuh* (by Jesús Sotelo Inclán, 1949) or to the 'pride of the Indian' like the play *La Redención del Indio* (also by Rosales). The government also subsidized plays with an explicitly didactic character which were performed in open air or in large stadiums, like the play *Siembro* (by Rosales) about illiteracy. This play, which had its opening performance in the National Stadium (Mexico City) in 1945, had as its theme the 'sowing of education and the reaping of development'.

Teatro campesino as an instructive medium was primarily stimulated by the so-called cultural Missions, serving the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP).[2] These Missions arose in the twenties to fight the lack of education in the countryside. Such a team generally consisted of a coordinator, a rural teacher, a music teacher, a sports teacher, a crafts teacher, an agricultural or technical teacher and a nurse.

The team lived in a rural community for a certain period and contemplated whatever social problems arose, ranging from the supply of drinking water to the building of an open-air theatre. After a reorganization of those Missions in 1942 their Department, which formed part of the General Directorate for Literacy and Field-education (an autonomous department within SEP), had at its disposal 48 *misiones* in the several Mexican provinces. In 1949 there were four sorts of Missions, rural, suburban, motorized and cinematographic. All four were engaged in cultural and welfare work. Only a small, yet significant, part of their work consisted in the promoting of rural theatre, for entertainment as well as educative purposes.

Between 1942 and 1948 the Cultural Missions were responsible for the building of 200 open-air theatres, the presentation of 500 performances and about 400 puppet shows. Many of the plays that were performed in the open air or in the village house were written by primary school teachers. Copies of these were spread by the Department of Rural Education. In those days, the General Directorate of Health Education also occupied itself with theatre for health instructions for the sake of child welfare. Through these plays the public was told the meaning of such notions as hygiene and vaccination. However, during the following years the interest for theatre as an educative medium decreased within the Missions. Film became the competitor of theatre and comics of puppet shows.

The Governmental Committee for Corn also used rural theatre to give instruction about the advantages of planting new species of corn. Because, in the meantime, it had become clear that not only children but adults too liked puppet shows, these were used in the corn campaign in the thirties. All of these plays about childcare, agricultural instruction or the National Campaign for Literacy of Adults (1932) were written beforehand. They were rehearsed and not improvised. And so there remains from this period quite a number of 2 to 10 page plays, such as *Letters are Letters* (on literacy), *The Drunkards* (on alcoholism), *We are Brothers* (on solidarity).

In 1950, in decree 7797 of the SEP, theatre is explicitly mentioned as one of the best media for field-education. A manual for rural teachers and a list of plays to be obtained from the ministry dates from that period. However, in the midfifties, theatre as a means of instruction disappeared entirely from the services provided bythe Cultural Missions.

In the cities, popular theatre was much more politicized. An example of this is the play *Labourers* by Francisco Monterde, a play that was put on stage by Fernando Romano in Mexico-City in the thirties as part of the *Acción Cívica* activities. There were no explicit didactic scenes, but rather theatrically developed themes about co-operation among labourers and the growth of political consciousness. One can imagine that the Mexican Government at the time was not really happy with these performances, even though they were part of the advance of the social and cultural consciousness of the labourers.

7.3. Adult education and cultural cultivation of the Mexican hinterland: CREFAL between 1950 and 1960

Teatro Campesino (peasants theatre) as a means of cultural development was supported in Mexico by the 'Regional Centre for Fundamental Education in Latin America' (CREFAL). Both CREFAL and the promotion of Fundamental Education were UNESCO initiatives at that time.

In 1960 Gutiérrez wrote a manual by order of CREFAL for those who taught adults in the country and who wanted to start low budget productions with enthusiastic amateur actors. It is a contemplative book full of impressions and experiences which he underwent during the fifties when he took his first steps in this direction around Pátzcuaro (Michoacán). As a manual should, it lists a number of aspects to be kept in mind when theatre is played for and by the population.

As it happened, theatre as a means of transference agreed completely with one of the

latent objectives of CREFAL's campaign for the promotion of fundamental education, which was the build-up of a national consciousness. In those days, *teatro campesino* was not explicitly aimed at the stimulation of its players and audience towards a critical attitude to the socio-political circumstances in which they lived.

It concerned educative theatre which gave thefirst impulse to 'cultural development'. Therefore, a repertory was used which encompassed, essentially, the entire stage literature, so that the countryman was introduced to the 'cultural heritage' in the field of theatre. Besides classical Spanish plays, translations of Molière, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and all kinds of Christmas and Passion plays were used. That Gutiérrez (1960: 31) limited himself in this set-up to repertory theatre was not due to a lack of interest or understanding, but much more to political obstructions of those days. Yet, in choosing the plays a selection was made. Plays were chosen in which representatives of the status quo were put down in such a way that social injustice could be denounced in a trivial way. In this way there was no danger of political repercussions. But, neither did it result in public change. Social injustice often served as the scenery.

An example of this was the performance of an allegorical play by José Zorilla entitled *Don Juan Tenorio*, a burlesque play in which representatives of the ruling powers, as for example the police, are ridiculed. Originally, this classical Spanish play is set in Sevilla. For *teatro campesino*, text and context of the play were transposed to Mexico during the revolution of 1910 to provide the rural population with a feeling of history and national identity. These kinds of adaptations and revisions of repertory plays, such as placing them in a historical context, textual condensation, simplification of the plot, Mexicanizing, translation into local dialect, adaptation of costumes, etc. were presented for inspection by the adapters and directors to the notables of the rural communities. On the one hand, as a kind of censure, on the other as a sort of public poll.

After CREFAL's team of experts on 'fundamental education' had introduced the idea of teatro campesino into the various villages, they had to train a number of capable people for the continuation of this idea. The first to be approached for this purpose were primary schoolteachers. They often appeared to be less motivated for this goal than some local inhabitants, who were already producing theatre with their fellow villagers or who had become enthusiastic as a result of this initiative. One of the items in which these new directors were trained was the importance of combining reading and writing for illiterate actors with learning the part. The rehearsals were often based on imitation, with the director acting things out when the actor did not know how to proceed.

So through these stage productions, illiterate actors were first faced with the necessity to learn to read and write. For newly literate people, this was their first acquaintance with literature. Learning their lines by heart caused serious problems for illiterate actors. They were often supported in this by primary school children and teachers from the village. The text was read out time and again, until the actors knew it by heart. Text interpretations too, often formed a problem which duly resulted in discussions concerning theatrical authenticity and Mexicanizing.

Performances were usually done out in the open, in village squares, school yards or in classrooms, in front of the church or just in the street. The advantages of outdoor performances are, according to Gutiérrez (1954: 55); that they agree with traditional local open-air festivities (such as, for example, religious processions); that they require by definition an 'enlarged' acting style, that action is more important than dialogue; that they require special qualities and abilities from the players, such as voice control and the ability to improvise; that they need a simplification of plot and fable and that they avoid the grandiloquence of much theatrical rhetoric.

7.4. Popular education and popular theatre in the Latin American context of the seventies

During the late sixties, students taking courses at the Prestaciones Culturales division of the federally administered Bureau of Mexican Social Security decided to experiment with theatricalperformances for a large audience. They called their group Trashumante theatre, after the Trashumante Indians who were a nomadic tribe in central Mexico, and who disappeared after the Spanish conquest.

> "The Prestaciones Culturales division was created by the Social Security institution to give courses from four to nine daily 'for the enrichment of the people both occupationally and culturally'. At the end of each semester (December and June) exhibits of the pupils' work are placed in the main lobby of the building. The plays, dance and chorus recitals are given in the auditorium free of charge to an audience reaching from government officials to shoe-shine boys. The dances and songs are authentically 'folkloric'. Their execution is based on instructions received from the research department located in Mexico City. Costumes representing each Mexican region as well as different historical eras are stored in the Prestaciones warehouse, also in Mexico City. Upon request, they are loaned to the dance and drama departments throughout the country. The plays have a national theme or one that is expected to appeal to a lower class audience" (Simon 1972: 28).

The performances in the auditorium of the Social Security Institute drew so much attention that it was decided to perform in different quarters of the city. This resulted in the inhabitants of these urban areas taking an interest in the courses of the Prestaciones Culturales, but they were not able to come to the main building to take part in the courses. For this reason the organization started to bring drama courses to factories and church halls, which increased the potential of actors with a working class background. The cast of the Trashumante production *Farsa y Justicia del Corregidor* by the early twentieth century playwright Alejandro Casona, was composed mainly of workers of a local factory where the drama course was given.

The place where Trashumante ran longer was the Home Fair in Parque España in 1971. This fair was held for forty-two days in a small park in a working class area. The most important day of this festival was the Mexican Independance Day (September 16th). Students of the Prestaciones Culturales performed authentic Mexican music from the different provinces of the country on the occasion of this local festival. They were in the local dress indicated by the origin of their music. There were stalls which sold regional snacks and drinks. And the artisans who had taken part in the handicraft courses of Prestaciones Culturales found buyers enough for their products.

Yet Trashumante was of the opinion that it had not reached a large enough part of the Mexican population, and that its approach could introduce to the audience themes of greater social relevance. Using a truck which had been converted to a theatre gave Trashumante theatre not only a greater audience, but also some new tasks. The truck carried, for instance, a small library of simple reading material on elementary geography and history for neoliterates. On Saturday afternoons readers were found round the truck reading their borrowed books on the village green during part of the afternoon and the evening. A number of comic books describing important historical deeds and characters in the USA was put at Trashumante's disposal by the United States Information Services.

Since Trashumante's fresh start using this trailer truck in 1972, it has notified the need of educational programmes. Medical specialists and artists were invited to design educational slide series to give instruction in basic hygiene and sanitation. Educational films on agricultural topics such as soil conservation and methods of increasing orchard yields were shown, as Simon (1972:33) reports. Because many of those who lived in the *barrios* regularly returned

to the small family plots in the countryside during planting and harvesting time, it was hoped that they would put their new knowledge into practice and pass it on to other fellow community members.

This shift in emphasis in the policy of the Trashumante group, to focus the attention on educational programmes rather than on cultural programmes, is consistent with the general trend in Latin American views on theatre and developmental work. In the context of the Proyecto de Animación Desarrollo (PRADE), which focuses a lot of attention on Mexico's indigenous culture in its project, a theatre group was formed in the rural community of San Miguel Tzinacapan, which was called Nimayana, and which, on the basis of improvisation, produced plays for its own community on themes which concerned that community, as for example the move to the city by young people. Its first collective play was called *El Hombre Nuevo*, and it reflected the feeling of discord in the community, which was due to the rapid changes taking place in the rural areas. The play was a collage of skits, texts, poems, songs and anecdotes. Their following plays, too, according to Flores (1979: 2), dealt primarily with the confrontation with the Indian culture and the feeling of lost identity due to people leaving their village, and exploitation by non villagers.

However, the plays did not have the low atmosphere which one would expect. They were usually performed at festive occasions, and aimed not only to conscientize, but also to provoke action. The model being used clearly had its roots in Paulo Freire's views on education. And usually the play's conclusion was that one was responsible for one's own development, and that that development can only be achieved when acting collectively. This was the subject of the group's second production, *El Fuego Nuevo*, and an obvious sequel to the first production.

The starting point was themes which are important to the community, which were discussed by means of socio-drama. The problems which were dealt with, aided by a *dinamizador*, were commercialization, health care and alcoholism. The plays were developed theatrically and reached a large audience when performed, for instance, on the feast of the patron saint of San Miguel. The actors collaborating with the group that had done the preparation were mainly young people from thecommunity. This, according to Flores (1979: 5), caused one of the spectators to remark: 'What has impressed me most is not so much what they say to me, but who says it and the way in which they say it to me'. It was appreciated that young people enthusiastically participated in the production process.

7.5. Popular theatre in the slums of Guadalajara, Mexico

The Mexican Institute for Community Development (IMDEC) is an NGO, set up in Guadalajara, Jalisco in 1963 for the benefit of slum dwellers and small rural communities. The institution provides training and research in the field of social communication, elementary administration and economics, and advises on such matters as the organization of co-operative and social housing. IMDEC does such work not only for its own projects but also for projects organized by others. Training is provided for community workers who are active at the grass roots level of Mexican society. The institution also has its own social housing projects in Ciudad Guzmán, Autlan and Guadalajara, projects which are stimulated and supported by so-called methodology workshops, about which more will be said later.

In 1979, IMDEC started the Experimental Workshop on Popular Expression (TEEP) which acts independently but in close co-operation with IMDEC in the field of education, communication and promotion of *cultura popular*. TEEP's programme consisted of three principal elements. First, it produced learning materials; second, it created, stimulated and coached popular workshops in which techniques for *educación popular* were developed; third, the workshop approach aimed at organizing manifestations and *pena* (people's clubs) for various solidarity programmes and demonstrations.

The aim of the Santa Cecilia project was to help the people of the area through social

work, with activities concerned with health care, better housing, cooperatives and so on. In the firstplace, social communication in the district had to be improved. Popular theatre was used as a method to achieve a more balanced organization and to give the inhabitants more insight into social problems. In addition to social plays, in which subjects were raised such as the struggle for the rights of a community, or instant theatre which was used to promote subjects and manifestations that required immediate attention, two other kinds of *teatro popular* were used. In the first place, a formal dramatic company was set up for young people which followed traditional dramatic methods. Their first experience consisted of organizing a group of minimal technical preparations (physical training, voice control and so on), and of producing a play. This modern style play, *Incomunicado*, appealed to the people of the area because of its theme. Simultaneously, it served as an initial 'finger exercise' for this group.

After this first exercise, the second play was to be written, performed and produced by the group itself. The working method included exercises in expression and improvisation, based on the historical background of each member of the group. In this they aimed at stimulating the process of critical thought about their own background and the living conditions of a migrant. The material obtained from these personal experiences resulted in a story about a typical family of rural migrants, showing the reasons why they had left the rural areas and the problems that had arisen in their first contacts with urban culture. The title of the play was *Thrown Out There and Kept Down Here*. For the group's members, the play evoked a historical awareness of their own past. After the production they were no longer ashamed of that past: on the contrary, they incorporated it into their new reality. The play was such a success in Santa Cecilia that the group was frequently invited to give performances in other urban districts.

The second way in which theatre was used had a considerable social effect and developed over a long period. The initiative came from a discussion group of local youngsters. The group was asked to perform the Stations of the Cross during Easterweek, and they chose the Seventh Station which gives an impression of Christ's second fall on His way to Mount Calvary. The group translated this into the present-day social reality of industrial labourers who time and again break down under the yoke of injustice and oppression.

The reaction to this performance made the group so enthusiastic that they decided to use theatre as a means of social communication. They continued to investigate and adapt elementary forms of theatre. The subject of their next production was Mother's Day. In Latin America the mother plays an important role, but this is obscured by commercial publicity which cheapens popular sentiment for monetary gain. The play shows how the Mexican peasant mother is neglected by her husband and children for 364 days of the year, and suffers numerous manifestations of *machismo*.

The situation was depicted as a comedy by ridiculing the commercial advertisements which exploit people's feelings for financial gain. This play, and the many that followed, was structured as a lawsuit entitled *The Trial of a Mother*. The underlying idea was to bring out during the performance a number of accusations based on reality. Time and again efforts were made to give structure to the chosen problem. The third theme chosen by the group was Father's Day. The father was represented as belonging to the working class, thus enabling class struggle to be brought into the play indirectly. The title was *The Trial of a Father*, and the play was performed in several districts of Guadalajara. The involvement of the local people was quite considerable. The dramatic plot of the play confronted them with their own social situation and oppression. After some time the play achieved complete participation of the audience, made possible by a public tribunal consisting of people from the audience, and built into the play, and by continuous evaluation afterwards. The scope of this chapter does not allow us to discuss all the plays developed by this group in great detail. The principal themes included Mexican Independence, problems concerning health care, the subject of surplus value, and so on. With regard to Mexican Independence, it was made clear that the

circumstances under which Mexican labourers and small farmers live are still based on injustice and exploitation. Another theme was rural-urban migration. The play about Compadre Day again illustrated commercial methods by which sentiment is converted into consumptive behaviour. The play about health care problems among the rural and urban poor showed the corruption and dehumanization of medical services.

Apart from these social productions in order to support IMDEC's community work, so-called 'popular festivals' were organized on the basis of the deeply rooted idea of fiesta. These well-attended open-air festivals, held each fortnight, were identified fully with district life. Drama, dance, music, AV programmes and such were presented on a pattern determined by the various media. The contents, composition and development of these festivals eventually came to be organized and controlled by the district organizations.

7.6. Theatre and slum improvement: IMDEC's approach and working method

Concerning the methods employed in the workshops, IMDEC was inspired by the writings of Francisco Gutiérrez (1975: 133-137) in Costa Rica, who searched for the integration of theatre as a *total language* within Latin American developments in the field of popular education.

For the preparation within the theatre groups, but also within the work with the communities, small audio-visual media such as photos, slides, cassettes and film were used to explain and raise a discussion on the social context of a theme or a problem. This was done, for example, in the preparation of the play about Mexican Independence. Another way to provide a theme with a social context was to illustrate the national and international news connected with the theme in a controversial way, a method which strongly reminds one of the 'newspaper theatre'-method of Boal. Thecentral idea, however, is that via theatre as a didactic instrument, one can often achieve more and transfer more than by intellectual twaddle. 'Popular theatre' is used here within the frame-work of *educación popular*, by and for the communities, to exceed mere propagandist and agitating purposes. The ultimate goal of the use of popular theatre is that it becomes an instrument for popular communication in the hands of and on behalf of the local people themselves.

As far as the procedure and dramatic techniques are concerned, first the theme to be played was chosen and analysed within its social context, together with the community or people in the neighbourhood. Thus a thematic core and a network of corresponding secondary themes arose. Secondly, together with the community, an objective meaning (denotation) of the central problem was found within its social reality. The experiences and problems of the community with regard to the basic theme were central issues. In this way, the basic theme was split into components of experience. Thirdly, the subjective meaning (con notation) of the basic theme was defined. This consisted of the subjective interpretation and the shared emotions of the community concerning the central theme and problems. This phase is of vital importance for the dramatic structure of the future play. Here the characters are born and outlined.

Since theatre, within the framework of a popular education, ought to explain clearly and simply the relations of the theme to those of a broader socio-economic and political structure, the fourth phase consisted in reading about and conceptualizing the basic theme and its concrete problems within the basic social structure. In short, this phase pays attention to the 'theoretical framework'. It is in the fourth phase that theatre obtains significance as a simple code which reflects crucial problems (such as alcoholism, drug addiction, economic problems, etc.). This does not mean that each play should give a comprehensive and complex economic political explanation, but rather should show in a simple way that each aspect of social reality forms an integrated part of a greater whole.

The example of alcoholism, for instance, dealt with the revelation of economic interests

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and social backgrounds which caused drinking. It was a formative phase for the group itself. It not only led to the consideration of the problems dealt with, but prepared the group better for discussion which regularly developed with an audience after a performance. The fourth phase consisted of an additional examination in which lacunae in information, caused during the objective denotation, were filled by means of documentation, observations and interviews. During the fifth phase they came to a rough outline of the story and the plot. Here, by means of social analysis, objective denotation and conceptualization defined the contents of the story, whereas the imagination defined its form. During the sixth phase, the characters were selected and the dramatic structure was elaborated. The phase of subjective connotation, as described before, supplied the raw material to fill in the characters on stage.

During the seventh phase the characters were cast. Finally, the scenes were developed and rehearsed by means of improvisations. Thus, with a minimum of means, a final collective product was achieved.

There were experiments with, for example, shadow theatre, masks, mime and clownery. Existing and adapted songs and music were also used for the plays. Music was considered to be an important addition to the theme that was acted out. Themes in the field of hygiene were, for example, illustrated by way of shadow shows. The technique for shadow theatre was derived from the Chinese shadowplays. It was, because of its lack of a third dimension, used as a comic and grotesque motion play alternated with the work of acting by live actors.

The mask play had, of old, filled an important place in the authentic Mexican theatre and was deeply rooted in native rites. The generally known codification of animals referring to different social classes was used here. By means of masks, the behaviour of these animals was humanized and there arose a number of plays in which the fable unexpectedly gained political significance.

Mime, as well as 'socio-drama', were two basic techniques in the training of community leaders. Popular educators used theatre exercises as a didactical instrument in the formative process. One day during the training of these leaders, for example, economic statistics were studied, analysed and their social implications defined. This was done in small groups. Each group was asked to mime his interpretation of the statistics for the other groups. This became a great success. Later, these mimic sequences were used, together with a harlequin (as a sort of quiz master) to construct an evening programme. Yet, the reverse also took place: the theatre group was asked to compose a short piece of socio-drama based on an actual problem within the community that served to stimulate discussion, reflection and, later, action within the community.

7.7. Final remarks

Towards the end of the sixties some movement arises within the periphery of Latin American theatre and the basis for a new theatre culture is formed, which profiles itself more and more clearly either supported or countered by oppression. It arises from an international political situation, which justifies a certain amount of hope and optimism in the transition to the seventies. Rense Royaards (1981: 23-26) summarized the Latin American developments in theatre during the 1970s in the following way:

> "This is the climate in which theatre makers feel bound to take a new direction. The new theatre which arises from this cannot be generalized. There are corresponding elements but one cannot speak of a homogeneous movement. The political circumstances in the various Latin American countries on which theatre is based or to which it offers resistance are very diverse and determine the developments in different ways. But, the predominant key note indicates a striving for economical and cultural independence. The existing dramaturgy (imported or not) was hardly a mirror of reality, let

alone a contribution to a change of reality. If it was to be changed, the people had to be addressed, if the people were to be addressed they were to be found in the street, in the favelas (...).

When, during the seventies, the situation in Latin America is drastically changed and the dictatorships in Bolivia, Uruguay, Chili, Argentina, Colombia (...) succeed one another, a theatre culture has developed of which the traces cannot be erased anymore".[3]

Next to these general artistic developments in Latin America, the Roman Catholic Church strongly supports a large part of the small-scale aid-projects in rural areas or in slums through non governmental organizations. Apart from a number of small media like slides, photos, drawings, photonovels and bulletins, these organizations also make use of theatrical forms of expression which appeal to the population, or which, through the centuries, have become part of local tradition.

These local basic organizations generally organize educational activities in the field of non-formal education or adult education. As has become evident from this chapter, the educative component in the various project activities is rather divergent. Because the educative component has been deliberately interwoven with the other activities, it is difficult to trace it separately. Therefore, this is often called an integrated project approach. For instance, people are taught to read and write with the help of learning study materials which also inform them about other things that could be of practical use, such as the market prices of cotton, solidarity and cooperativism, and hygiene or plant diseases.

The seventies saw in Mexico, too, the Universities being active with socially committed theatre which was created collectively. From the end of the sixties onward the students' theatre of Mexico also played a major role in making theatre accessible to underprivileged social groups. The theatre group of the University of Vera Cruz in the Xalapa, the capital of the province, which was controlled by the Institute for Aesthetic Research and Artistic Education, therefore, according to Royaards (1978), performed in prisons, for senior citizens, in schools and day nurseries, and in the surrounding villages, in order to clarify, by way of drama, the mechanisms of social abuse.

These initiatives to create plays collectively influenced not only many young theatre makers, but also semi-State institutions, as for example the Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS). They tried to integrate theatrical activities in their Cursos de Actuación in their Centros de Bienestar Familiar. In this case the main thing was to find a useful and cheap way of leisure activities for IMSS members. They worked with professional drama teachers who streamlined the end products of a theatre workshop, which meant that they could no longer be called collective performances. On Sunday evenings throughout the year there were performances in the slums of Mexico City, in the open air and free of charge.

Accessibility was less easy in the case of groups connected with the university, which performed in auditoriums and charged their audiences. One of the best-known groups of the beginning of the seventies was Centro Libre de Experimentación Teatral Artística (CLETA-UNAM), which built up a repertory of home made versions of classic plays. Their versions developed during very extensive improvisation workshops. Also the students of the Escuela de Teatro del Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes were at the time experimenting with producing collective creations on the basis of improvisation.

VIII.
African Universities Hit the Road: From Travelling Theatre to Theatre for Development

In the sixties, when a large number of African colonies became independent, a kind of pan-African relationship arose between these young states. This by no means eliminated all traces of European influence, however. French, English or Portugese continued to be used in the schools at all levels, and pupils or students were expected to sound as British or French as possible. For the little drama there was, criteria were drawn from European literary traditions and ideas.

Post-independence African dramatists were largely educated at the young national universities, which were started in the sixties. The initiatives of a small group of foreign employees, attached to the English or Drama Departments (sometimes also called the department of 'Dance, Music and Drama' or the department of 'Performing Arts') was of special importance to the development of new ideas about the relationship between theatre and society.

During that time, there sprang from the universities a kind of development oriented theatre, which was different from the pre-independence type. Students at the universities of Uganda, Botswana, Zambia and Malawi formed touring theatre companies. In the seventies, another approach of development oriented theatre evolved in Botswana. Instead of going on a tour performing ready-made plays on themes considered relevant to the villages by outsiders, this was the first instance of theatre makers, front-line workers and local population cooperating to study those themes which the villagers considered relevant, and to organize discussions after the performances in order to mobilize the people to undertake action.

But this way of making theatre had its limitations, too, despite attempts to place performances second to the process of making theatre. At this stage it was still the outsiders who decided which problems dominated life in thevillages and how they should be dealt with. It was for that same reason that during the early eighties a new approach was first tried out by a group of students and teachers at the Ahmadu Bello University (Nigeria). After collecting basic data concerning the village, the team no longer retired in order to shape these data into theatrical relevant scenes, but they analysed and dramatized these basic data in co-operation with the local population. The function of the students became that of resource persons who trained the population and assisted it when making their own plays. This whole working process from problem definition to performance became the objective of the learning experience. They were responsible for the influence of Brecht's views on theatre when dramaturgical theories and practices were developed at the universities of Tanzania or Nigeria. A number of Brecht adaptations in exactly this African context are known in which the local narrative tradition, the characteristics of the oral culture, and the techniques which Brecht advocated in his 'epic theatre' have been combined.

8.1. Theatre and educational mass campaigns in colonial West Africa

The success of national educative campaigns in the First World was taken into account after World War II, when colonial administrations started to implement their ideas about mass education in their colonies. During the late forties and early fifties, a Mass Education Campaign was started in post-war British colonial West Africa[1], in order not only to teach the rural population in the Twi and Ewe speaking areas to read and write, but also in order to provide them with agricultural extension, health care, sanitation and child care. Above all it was, as Barton (1950: 1024) puts it, a programme of education in citizenship. The design of the campaign was rather advanced, in the sense that it was based on the integration of the various sectors of the development campaign. In addition, atwo-phase model was used for the education as offered within the campaign. Initially, programme-coordinators originating from the different rural communities were trained. After this network of local stimulators had been established, the organization of the small-scale projects took place in the villages themselves.

At the time, this approach was internationally termed 'fundamental adult education'. The literacy approach used here was that of Laubach (Barton 1950: 1022), a method to the effect that a first impulse to learn to read and write functionally had already been given. The instruction in reading and writing was tuned to the living environment of the adult student, and with lessons in health, nutrition, child care, methods of ensuring a clean water supply, and so on.

Drama, music and dance were used to tempt local musicians into signing on as community coordinators of the follow-up of the campaign. Local band leaders were offered a course in reading notes and the maintenance of instruments. The 146 enrolments exceeded all expectations the project leaders might have had. While the people were taught how to read and write, they received information about the follow-up at the local level of their own district villages.

So in this Mass Education Campaign, drama was primarily used to motivate a team of animators, as well as the communities, to take part in the education activities of the campaign. In order to prevent stretching reality on stage, research was done as to local problems and etiquette, so that the skits would not have actors addressing a chief in the wrong manner, or an actress raising her left hand. These errors in local cultural conventions could completely destroy the effect of the skits.

Pickering (1957: 180) described how students from the local communities designed crude story outlines for four short skits about literacy, child care, co-operation, and sanitation. The first impulses toward the outlines were developed during discussion sessions, after which, with only a minimum of assistance, the small pieces were further developed by improvisation. Before theywere shown in the communities, they had to pass the close scrutiny of the supervising instructor and some officials. The skits were intended as 'propaganda', Pickering's own term (1957: 180) for the sub-campaigns 'Child Care and Nutrition' and 'Village Health and Sanitation'.

The message in this type of skits is clear at once. The way in which the message is driven home in some stories would be quite unacceptable today, due to changed views or ethics. Take for instance a skit about health care in which the patient goes to a local healer who, however, cannot cure him. Then the patient is urged, against his own will, to visit a governmental health care centre. Western medicine cures the man. In view of the more carefully balanced appraisal of traditional modes of treatment that developed during the seventies, the crude and simple opposition between the 'bad' local healer and the 'good' medical doctor trained in the West would not make a great hit today.

The following examples reveal the 'straightforwardness' of the messages in the plot development of the sketches made for the promotion of literacy. There was a sketch about

an attractive and well-educated young man with wealthy parents. He had to choose his future wife from three of his uncle's daughters. He chose the least attractive girl because she knew how to read and write. Afterwards her two attractive sisters promptly decided to attend literacy class. Another sketch shows a woman wrapping up her husband's lunch in a paper which later turns out to have been the affirmation of an application. After the matrimonial turbulence diminished, the man sends his wife to a literacy class. The third sketch confronts us with a trade agreement between a chief and a private enterprise. It deals with the sale of twenty acres of land. The chief signs it with a thumb print. Later it appears that the contract has been tampered with and that he has sold this firm two hundred acres of land, whereupon the company has successfully started to dig for diamonds. After a public trial on stage (always a popular favourite) the contract is declared void, but the court also notes that it is about time that the chief and his elders learn how to read and write.

A final example taken from Dickson (1950: 51) is hardly conceivable these days. A woman keeps finding little notes in her house written in a hand different from her husband's. She starts to learn to read and write and discovers that her husband is having an affair. The promotion of literacy classes by this sort of plot line concerning the relationships between the sexes would now be denounced as sexist and male oriented.

8.2. Travelling University Theatre in Uganda

Travelling University theatre, which involved students touring the country during their summer holidays with a repertory, actually first arose in Uganda during the years 1964-1966. Later this initiative died out in Uganda. Precisely because it was the intention to take culture to the country and because the country was not used to paying entrance fees, admission was free there. Nevertheless money was collected, usually at some dead point in the performance. It also occurred that people gave money spontaneously.

Aid was obtained from the Department of Planning and Community Development and from the British Council, which put landrovers at their disposal; from Esso, which payed for the petrol; from Kampala's National Theatre[2], which allowed a performance on the basis of receipts; from the Nyanza Textile Industry, which provided textile for costumes; from several professional theatre companies which gave costumes; and from Coca Cola which covered the cost of posters. The University of Makarere also contributed financially. Smaller funds were obtained by releasing parts of the performance for broadcasting.

Apart from using posters on arrival, the landrover was mostly used to make a tour of the district to announce the performance. The students had a total audience of 17,000 people. They were put up in English and Swahili and in the local tongue where possible. The plays were performed with a minimum of props and a minimal set. A largebackdrop could be used for several scenes. In addition, the costume trunks were used when the plays asked for a table or bench. A lot of attention was given to the costumes. They had to gratify the eye. Soundsettings, recorded on tape, were also used. During the tour of 1965 forty two performances were done in schools, squares, stadiums and theatres. The majority of the performances took place out in the open. Sometimes they did three performances a day, sometimes even in different places.

Scenes from Nyerere's translation of Shakespeare's *Julius Ceasar* appealed to the audience. Mainly, visually attractive scenes were selected, such as the encounter of Ceasar and Brutus with their wives, the scene at the Capitol and Ceasar's murder; the death of Brutus. All these death scenes the audience found highly amusing. During the tour of 1966, Chekhov's play *The Proposal* had been set in an obvious African setting; this applied to the characters as well as to the story and the visual context. This tour was also clearly meant to promote plays by young African playwrights. One-act plays, of local setting were well received because

of their comic and satiric effects, the local language, the recognizable costumes, the typification and because of the epic character.

Apart from the scenes from Julius Ceasar, all other African plays were short comedies which received madly enthusiastic reactions. Despite that, the plays in English were always claimed to be the most beautiful by the audience, the reason being that, in the spectator's eyes, the English plays always carried more weight, were more serious. There was always a short introduction in Swahili or in the local tongue about the contents of the English plays.

The actors had to get used to the way the rural population actively participated in and reacted to the performances. The players were sometimes rather troubled by the talking and shouting. They had not realized in advance that lines spoken on stage would be passed on among the audience. The fact that the audience commented directly on what the characters were saying, or even spontaneously opened a dialogue with the characters, as often happened quite unexpectedly. The same held for the multitude of children who often poured in and moved up more and more towards the playing area, until there was no more space to play.

The actors also had to get used to awkward moments of laughter. This not only happened with forms of 'dramatic irony', when the audience foresaw what was coming while the characters on stage were not supposed to know yet. It also happened in the case of tragic irony as, for instance, with a death or an accident. In this way there suddenly arose laughter at a serious moment deliberately chosen by the director and the actor to bring about climax in a monologue. The same was often true for the appraisal of a performance. When the actors thought it a poor performance, the audience, as it appeared afterwards, had enjoyed it immensely.

8.3. Popular theatre and adult education in Botswana

The influence of universities on theatre is most pre-eminent in an initiative undertaken in 1974 at the University Institute for Adult Education in Botswana. This initiative, known by the name of *Laedza Batanani*[31], has now grown into a very well defined and clearly evaluated project in which adult educators have used popular theatre as an instrument for programmatic rural development and community education. In the initiative, a number of factors have played an important role, such as the changing vision on adult education as it was formulated at that time by the Brazilian pedagogue and philosopher Paulo Freire, the changing view on social research which had previously been meant to be action oriented and participatory in character, and the changing view on the use of theatre as a didactic instrument, with the understanding that theatre should no longer be made for the people, but for, by and of the people.

From 1974 until 1977, adult educators in Botswana experimented with popular theatre as a medium for rural development. In the northern Bokalaka district, they developed theatre performances within the framework of the annual village festivals which were not so much of a political as of a social nature. Use was made of drama, puppetry, music, dance, singing and recitation. These village festivals are known as *Laedza Batanani*, which means 'the sun is already up, it's time to get down to business'.

Apart from the improvement of self-reliance, of independent development rather than reliance on government services, *Laedza Batanani* aimed at stimulating the people to make an active contribution to development projects (Kidd and Byram 1977). The Tswana - the vast majority of Botswana's population - had an institution cut out, as is were, for the purposes of this design - the *kgotla* or the village meeting. In traditional Tswana life, this public meeting held a central position.

Since independence this kgotla tradition had lost its importance, but had not yet been forgotten. Therefore, each village in the Bokalaka district knew the village meeting as a traditional channel of information and, since independence also as a communication channel

of government activities. Various extension services announced their new campaigns and activities to the communities through the kgotla. On the one hand, information from the outside could thus reach the entire community, and, on the other, decisions and actions originating from the village could be reported to the government apparatus. However, around 1974 the Bokalaka district had to contend with indifference and apathy on the part of the population where it concerned village meetings. Messages from outside were duly noted, but hardly passed on or commented upon.

The colonial background caused Botswana's performing arts' tradition to wane, although people were still very much interested in the recitation of oral literature, dances, songs, music, etc. Neither did they lack natural acting talents. 'Popular theatre', as a collection of traditional media, seemed to be of extreme usefulness as an educative instrument, even one that could bridge the barrier of illiteracy.

The Laedza Batanani approach in the sphere of non-formal education, especially adult education, combined with entertainment, was first tried in the Bokalaka district in 1974. The themes which were to be discussed were illustrated by picture books and pamphlets. However, drama remained the predominant medium in this multi-media approach; it consisted of short sketches depicting village problems (the medium as mirror). After the performance, the actors counselled the discussions among festival visitors which took place in small groups. After the success of this experiment, a circuit was designed; the group of actors counselled from village to village, from festival to festival. By 1977 this approach had already been taken over by the other districts in Botswana. Apart from dance, music, drama, etc. video was also enlisted in 1976, for purposes of evaluation.

The organization of the annual village festivals was put in the hands of the village council, the traditional kgotla. The community itself contributed to the organization and preparation of the festival. The discussed future themes which, as far as their village was concerned, were going to be important for the next festival. Shortly after this, the leaders of the different kgotlas met at a so-called working seminar where they encountered teachers, animators, extension officers, leaders of women's groups and actors. Split up into small groups the participants discussed their village problems in the areas of community development, agriculture, job creation, family relations, conflicting values, etc. and rendered a socio-economic report of their area.

In 1976 they had reached a point where they could even prioritize themes which the entire district felt to have in common. The actors demonstrated the problems more clearly by making them concrete. Chosen themes had to do with modest problems which could be solved within a year; a problem which only applied to a small group; a problem that could be solved without government in terference; a problem of which the solution could be coupled to current educative and extension activities in the field of education, agriculture, hygiene, health care, etc.

In 1974 the selected themes were family conflicts, employment for migrants, cattle lifting and village development; in 1975 they were the government proposition on land reform, tuberculosis, youth delinquency and stray cattle; in 1976 veneral diseases, sex education, nutrition, the production of cash crops and vegetables, and health care.

After this seminar of community leaders, group leaders, animators, extension officers and actors, the actors organized one or more workshops in which the themes were schematically outlined in a dramatic context. For this seminar some facilitators, extension officers and village leaders were invited. Together they analysed the village problems, possible bottlenecks and discussed other unforeseable events. They then wrote a preliminary script on the programme of the festival. Next, the actors, themselves locals, split up into small groups and started to write the lyrics for the songs, the music, the modest dances, the plots for the puppet shows, etc. The motto of the performance was realism. Stage props were limited to a minimum and the village-square, traditionally the location for the kgotla, was the stage.

This was the basis for the improvisations. As far as the sketches or performances were concerned, a fixed text was not aspired to. The course of the performance was only suggested in outline. Dialogue, mimicry and action were not elaborated in order to highlight the character of the ultimate performance as a spontaneous improvisation and to promote interaction with the audience. This gave room for a *couleur locale* which agreed with the intended realism. The actors impersonated stereotype characters, the number of which could be enlarged or reduced as necessary. Thus there was the miner, the village-drunkard, the cattle-rustler, the juvenile delinquent, etc. In soap-opera style such characters reappeared each year, thus possibly triggering off a process of recognition or identification. Although theatre was the most important medium of these festivals, it seemed that the addition of songs, puppet shows, etc. was also very significant.

Puppet shows, originally only for the little ones, grew to be so popular within the scope of the festival that it became an extra medium for adults. The songs, with a clear educative message were performed throughout the entire year until the new festival brought a new repertory. The new music and dances, too, appeared to be quite popular amongst the people. All in all, the popularity of these creative products improved the involvement and participation of the rural population. The audience's participation in the performance of 1974 was immediately stimulated by the transformation of all the people in the audience into visitors of the public gallery in a staged lawsuit treating the seduction of lonely women who had been left behind by miners who had found work in another district.

In the latter case, the actors played the prosecutors as well as other representatives of the law. Some men from the audience were charged with seduction. Others were called as witnesses. Since such feigned public lawsuits were already public spectacles traditionally, they appealed to the audience very much. Participation during the performance as well as during the ensuing discussions was intense. In the lawsuit against the cattle-rustler (an actor), the actor was even chased by the population at a feigned attempt to escape.

8.4. Chikwakwa-theatre: Way out in the country

During the first few years after Zambia's Independence, drama remained an elitist affair, which was mainly due to the unbridgeable gap between the local performing arts in the villages, and the kind of drama that was given shape by the university. This problem came to be recognized by the end of the sixties, and as a result the University of Zambia (Lusaka) tried to organize workshops in the field in which students, localfront-line-workers and representatives of the local population might produce performances collectively.

One of the first initiatives was the Kasama Theatre Workshop (1969), which was organized by the Department of Out-of-School Education. The participants and the organizers consisted of staff members and students of the university, local people and secondary school pupils from Kasama. The general objective was 'to educate and to entertain'. The specific objectives were:

1) the organization of a theatre workshop in the region as part of the annual activities of the Department of Field Studies in the area;

2) to provide the students who had finished the theatre course with practical drama experience in the country;

3) to contribute to the development of the performing arts in Zambia's rural areas. Apart from performances, general acting workshops were given during the evening.

Etherton (1969: 14) described popular theatre in the Zambian rural context as a theatre performance which appeals to large sections of the population, which does not limit itself to

an audience of a specific class or educational level and which aims at an audience from a distinct area. Here plays are staged in a simple, yet certainly not naive way. The story has to be appreciated by the audience and, simultaneously, has to have a distinct relevance to the social circumstances in which the audience finds itself. So the audience watches to learn and to be entertained.

The plays *The Talking Drum* (Selina Namwila) and *Infa* (George Simmers) were deliberately selected for the Kasama Workshop because they fitted well with traditional rural life, as far as the stories, the dances and the songs were concerned. The plays were partly performed in English and partly in Chi Bemba. *The Talking Drum* was put into the local tongue by one of the students. For the first time, existing textual plays were presented in a locallanguage. The productions were based on local culture and local forms of expression and performances were done in the open. The first performance took place on the Mungwi football ground for 600 people, the second performance in the Kasama stadium drew an audience of approximately 4,000.

In 1969, the university opened a theatre of its own called Chikwakwa, with a set company. 'Chikwakwa' is the Zambian name for chopping knife, with which the grass was cut for the making of roofs for the theatre. In order to lend a more permanent character to such incidental initiatives as the Kasama workshop, the Chikwakwa stuck to drama for the rural population as its main objective. This new theatrical movement was prompted by the Drama Department of the University of Zambia, as a result of its resolve to actually be of service to society. In its home base the theatre company developed a theatre style in which modern dialogue was integrated with traditional performing arts such as dancing, singing and music, traditional elocution, masquerades, etc.

This theatre collective of staff members and students wanted to bring theatre closer to the people. They tried to diminish the threshold to theatre attendance by keeping the entrance fee payable. Next to adaptations of classic non-African plays, there were also performances of plays by young Zambian and other African playwrights. Although most young Zambian playwrights were inclined to write in English and to take their manuscripts to the few publishers right away, Chikwakwa, in its return, stimulated writing in the local mother tongues. This was the only way to bring across to an audience the nuances, allusions and puns used by the new literary generation.

The Chikwakwa Theatre building also offered a place for the National Zambian Dance Troupe to perform. Because it was built on the outskirts of Lusaka, it could cater for the population living in its surroundings, whose attention could be drawn by megaphones from cars touring the streets, or people who had been brought in by coach from neighbouring areas. In October 1970 the theatre presented the government-supported production of *Che Guevara*, written by Mario Faratti and adapted to the South-African guerrilla war. This production was set up in order to add lustre to the Third Non-Aligned Summit Conference. Plays were chosen which could propagate a political or moral message, after adaptation to the contemporary situation. When in 1971 student revolts broke out in Lusaka, resistance arose against the supply of Mirage jet-fighters by the French government to South Africa. The Chikwakwa company, which was just doing a play about colonial history *(Kazembe and the Portugese)* immediately incorporated it into its performance.

Initially, Chikwakwa made theatre with socio-political themes, such as Kasoma's *Fools Marry*, Farrati's Che Guevarra and Jones' *The Chief Banishes (his) Heir*. According to Mwansa (1984: 24) they later became more and more inclined towards themes concerning development which were studied by means of improvisations as, for instance, in Chifunyise's *Blood* and *The District Governor*.

Blood is one of the oldest plays in the Chikwakwa repertory. It first appeared in 1974. It dealt with the confrontation between the old traditional healing methods and new modern medicine. In the course of time, the play has been repeatedly adapted. Originally, it only

ridiculed the traditional cures in order to eliminate suspicion with respect to the modern modes of treatment. Later, a more balanced version of *Blood* appeared.

Eventually Chikwakwa developed a touring theatre. In the first phase, when in imitation of the theatre caravan of Makarere University (Uganda) plays were only performed for the local population, dances and songs were derived from the location. The main objective was to make audience and actors experiment with a combination of traditional and modern elements of theatre. Actors who did not have a full command of the local tongue played adapted parts in English or, with some additional mime, in pidgin-English. At first it required considerable effort for the actors to grow accustomed to the continuous talking by and the direct reactions from the audience. Performances were given at schools,but also in football grounds.

The plays needed to be selected according to their length. This often made adaptation necessary. Since performances were out in the open, the plays had to be made attractive by an abundance of speed and action. Visibility was a first requisite, so dialogue was less emphasized. Actors had to be trained to play these productions according to a script, but not strictly to the letter. In view of the frequent audience response, a margin for improvisation had to be built in.

To play out of doors in front of a huge audience implied the use of an 'enlarged' acting style. For this reason there was no emphasis on subtle gestures, as was the case in the home base, Lusaka. Hence the costumes were - for the eye - more important than the set. Lighting consisted of great fires or paraffin lamps and gaslamps. The area of the performance had to be clearly staked out if the actors were not to be closed in more and more. They usually played with a minimal set and as few props as possible and the acting was generally naturalistic or realistic. They rehearsed in English, though performed and sang as much in the local language. Usually they selected plays wich had a political impact, but which lent themselves to satire and visual effect, such as Brecht's *Der Gute Mensch von Sezuan*. These productions drew considerable audiences.

The idea behind the touring theatre corresponded to Zambia's humanism as it had been proclaimed within the UNIP by Kenneth Kaunda. The idea that a country without a culture is as a body without a soul, supplemented with Kasoma's pronouncement 'theatre for the people', were the direct motives for the touring. The repertory of the plays supported this ideology. Although they were text-productions, they served their goal as eye opener for the population.

Finally, during the tour workshops were organized for the local population, resulting in productions with, for and by the people and promoting drama at local secondary schools. The rural theatre workshops in theatre techniques, playwriting and dance were actually of more importance than theactivities in Lusaka. The intention differed from that of the theatre caravan of Makarere University (Uganda). Students worked together with the rural population of the area in seminars and workshops to stage-manage a play, and afterwards toured that area. Thus students were obliged to leave their ivory tower of meditation about theatre. They taught the local population the importance of dialogue for a story line, while the local population taught them which dances, stories and songs were popular in the area.

In 1974-1975 Chikwakwa ran into difficult times because of a change of policy on the part of the government. This involved a preference for a more endogenous and independent Zambian culture. The import of foreign films, television programmes and radio programmes was ceased. Zambian dance, music and literary drama were stimulated from a pan-African point of view. In 1975-1976 student revolts at the universities took place which resulted in a blockage of university funds and activities. In 1979 the funds of Chikwakwa ran dry. In the meantime other groups with an identical ideology had risen in Lusaka, such as Tikwiza, Bazamai and Theatre Circle.

The initiatives in Zambia, concerning Chikwakwa, were rather different from the initia-

tives as described for the Botswana. Chikwakwa performed its plays in the provinces without any preliminary research into the cultural problems and needs in the area; most Chikwakwa productions were based on written texts, which were adapted to the local situations in design and language; during tour-time most performances were given at schools and other places where people usually did not loiter; the plays were performed by students and not by the local people; there were no post-performance discussions. In Botswana on the contrary the process of making a performance became gradually more important than the final performance. Therefore the project staff of Laedza Batanani worked with preliminary action-research, with improvisations in the local language, and with the local population itself as the best potential of actors. The Botswana productions were, in a way ofspeaking, tailor-made for the target groups at the local level.

8.5. Theatre for Development in Nigeria and Tanzania: from problem-definition to performance

In Nigeria, the drama departments of the universities have participated in ministerial development programmes. In 1977 the drama section of the Department of English Literature of Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria (Kaduna State; Nigeria) started a theatre workshop-cum-manifestation in Soba district. It was called *Wasan Manoma* (Farmer's Play). With the consent of the Dagacin, the chief of the district who is directly accountable to the Emir, a group of students left for four villages in this district. The military regime had just launched the large-scale national campaign Operation Food for the Nation, which was meant to help the peasants on all fronts. The central issue for the drama team was to find out how the peasants thought they could be helped by this campaign.

Action research on the spot indicated that the shortage and swindle of fertilizers was what annoyed the farmers most. In the eyes of most peasants, other problems were inferior to this. With the help of this information, four short play scenarios were constructed. The first was a satirical comment on the way agricultural extension officers preach development; the second and third skit followed each other naturally and dealt with the poor distribution of fertilizers, the corrupt attitude of the officials and the migration of poor peasants to the city. The fourth episode dealt with the organization of cooperatives among the poor peasants to make a stand against the already existing association of wealthy farmers (Crow 1979: 8-9; Etherton 1982).

Slowly, however, the university theatre groups realized that by staging local social problems they not only raised the awareness of their audience, but also expectations of help on the part of their audience. In those circumstances, students and staff are often confronted with the problem of follow-up activities. Problems are raised,discussions are held, but afterwards the audience are left to cope with the situation, without any practical solutions. That is why within the workshop set-up, drama clearly functions as a research instrument. The scripts are continuously adapted. The players and the audience can interrupt and stop the performance, to repeat a piece of improvisation and to analyse it as a fair social solution to the problem at hand.

Participants in these workshops learn, among other things, how to use locally existing theatrical forms of expression to produce and indigenize a performance; they learn how to write a scenario and how to apply a simple action-research analysis in the villages in order to obtain material for the plays. They are also trained in working together with the local people during rehearsals, improvisations and the final performance. Performances completely depend on audience participation. Therefore, the build-up, the design and the theme of the skits are such as to relate as well as possible to the way the local population is used to making and watching their own theatrical performances.

During rehearsals, improvisation techniques were regularly used to obtain a story line, to study the characters in depth, but also, as an analytical device to find solutions for a

sharpened conflict. Finally, improvisations were used to train the actors in dealing with audience participation. During the performances the actors still improvised because they worked with a story line, not with a set text. This made it possible for them to give direct response to reactions from the audience.

In general the onlookers very much enjoyed the public rehearsals that were held on the village green. Their comments were integrated afterwards into the skits. Some characters in the plays, like the sulky elder, were recognized as such and considered to be very funny, exactly because of his stereotype conservatism. Spontaneous forms of audience participation were quite frequent. However, genuine criticism on the conduct of the characters on stage was expressed right away by members of the audience during public rehearsals. When finally, within one of the playlets, there was a faked collection among the audience in order to buy fertilizers in town to serve the whole community, the audience gathered tree-leaves off the ground and gave those as their financial contribution to the actors.

According to Etherton (1982: 350), the notion slowly grew that in this approach it was not so much the final product (the performance) but the working process (making drama) which formed the kernel. 'Incompleteness' belongs to the basic didactic properties of this type of theatre. The participants do not discover social contradictions by watching a performance or by playing it, but rather by working on it during the rehearsals. Within this construction the performance is only one step in the production process and not even the most important one.

Despite the fact that the experiments in Nigeria in the eighties changed the views on the learning experiences of the village population, Crow and Etherton (1980) maintained that there is a problem inherent in this kind of experiment: the degree of social commitment as regards development aid on the part of those making the play. Crow and Etherton (1980: 581) wondered whether the 'catalysts' - the outsiders with specialized skills, who work as an organized group within the community - were themselves aware of the true value of the ideology they advocated when involved in an intervention process. It was often a question of temporary lip service to the latest social trend.

Therefore in some African countries, as for example in Tanzania, the members of the drama department of the national university started to experiment with a different kind of intervention strategy at a local level. They started to take up roles as drama consultants and resource persons to local self-help theatre projects initiated by NGOs. From the beginning of the 1970s onwards, the Department of Theatre Arts of the University of Dar es Salaam began working closely with local traditional performing artists in an attempt to learn from them and 'also to get the conservative, elitist teaching staff and students to accept these artists as knowledgeable and professional people' (Leshoai 1972: 23).

Since 1982, a team of staffmembers of the Department of Art, Music and Theatre of the University of Dar es Salaam was involved in such a project entitled Theatre for Social Development. This project was partly financed by OXFAM[4] and partly by the university itself. The project used theatre as an instrument to stimulate awareness raising concerning development problems with the local population by putting these local problems on stage, by discussing them and even by looking for solutions.

Part of this project took place in the village of Malya in the Mwanza district. With its 5000 inhabitants, it is larger than the average Tanzanian village. Because of the cultivation of cash crops (rice and cotton) and because of good transport and trade facilities, Malya developed an urban appearance reflected in its social and cultural life. Politically, Malya functioned as an Ujamaa-village[5]. The first introduction of the project Theatre for Social Development to the village took place during a disco specifically organized by the local government for that purpose. During this evening, Malya's theatre company also gave a performance in which, through dance, song and drama, it dealt with the phenomenon of unwanted pregnancy of young girls.

Immediately after the performance there were discussions in small groups. The audience were asked if the problem been put on stage as it had occurred in Malya. The answer was affirmative. The problem had been worsening because of a growing dependence on cash crops, and according to the population the causes were: co-education, the growing need for money, prostitution and unemployment, the craving for luxury articles, inflation and permissiveness to children. The people were unanimous in that the changes in traditional values caused a moral decline, but also in that, concerning these values, a difference existed between young and old. Modern institutions such as bars, discos and restaurants provided youngsters with places where they could misbehave.

Finally the remark was made that the play did not clearly represent the situation of Malya; neither did it offer any good solutions. The team and the cultural group revised the play on account of these remarks. As far as the artistic form was concerned, it would be played in the local tongue and would use the local Sukuma dances, elocution techniques, songs and skits. After twelve days of rehearsals under the guidance of the university team, the play was shown to the population once more and was received with quite some enthusiasm.

8.6. Final remarks

In the preceding chapters we have discussed several case studies, like the ones from Indonesia, where the paved way of tradition was being followed; or from Mexico where theatrical performances were part of wider awareness-raising projects which included other means and other actors than those actually on the stage; or from Africa where enthousiastic lecturers in the post independence period were motivated by a personal sense of social involvement to link up drama with adult education.

Although in the cases presented, the initiators have attempted to use popular theatre in order to effect structural changes in society, several clear differences are observable which are indicative of the way in which initiators perceived the use of popular theatre. The examples from Indonesia illustrate the use of what have been called 'folk media' by multilateral aid and UN organizations for the dissemination of information only. The Mexican case on IMDEC's activities, however, illustrates how fully committed staff members of an urban-based NGO became interested in a more democratic diffusion of the performing arts.

This objective of using popular theatre demanded at least some reflection of socio-economic reality in rural areas, and forced the initiators to deal with this reality within their theatrical work. They did not use traditional performing genres. Instead, local means of expression were used to introduce and develop theatre within the rural communities as an instrument for providing information as well as for raising critical reflection. Finally, the Mexican example illustrated how a local NGO aimed primarily at organizing rural communities. For this purpose theatre was used in addition to seminars, audiovisual means, etc. In this case, theatre not only served to provide information or to raise critical consciousness, but also to stimulate local action.

In the African case study the history of 'theatre for development' is dated back to the fifties. The first experiments in this field were carried out under colonial rule during the transitional period when African colonies had a great desire for independence. Experiments using theatre as a means of propaganda date back as far as the thirties, as for example in Kenya, in order to explain to the population the importance of storing corn or, as in Nyasaland, in order to explain the importance of health care. But the frequent use of theatre as part of large scale campaigns was first tried out systematically during the post-war colonial period, in the early fifties, by the British in their Mass Education Campaigns in the Gold Coast, Ghana and Togoland.

In these cases, drama was not primarily used to reach the local population, but rather to establish a team of intermediaries within the rural communities, which could be turned

to at a later stage when campaigning for literacy, health care, sanitation and the like; they could facilitate and co-ordinate the campaigns locally. Drama here was a means to motivate people to participate in campaigns, and to provoke discussion among the audience. As regards content the skits used were simple in the presentation of the problem set, and farcical as regards story line, plot and acting. The skits were based on instant local research, and the results of improvisation. They were designed to be played for an audience. Audience participation was limited to approving or disapproving remarks on what was presented. The actors were extension officers, and often combined their performances with practical demonstrations. It was in fact a form of mass education in order to encourage community development and education at community level.

Since the sixties and seventies new initiatives in the use of performing arts within adult education were taken and experimented with by African universities. Almost every African nation has its own university 'department of performing arts' which grants degrees up to the level of doctorate. Since these departments were called into being, lecturers and students have come to realize that a practical group probation on behalf of cummunity development ought to form an established part of the curriculum. These ideas concerning the use of performing arts in adult education most often have been worked out in close collaboration with the departments of education.

Initiatives to 'theatre for development' have usualy been taken by a professional training college or a university, and are often of a highly personal nature. It may be that a lecturer in an English or Drama Department is motivated by a personal sense of social involvement to tackle African authors rather than to restrict work to European classical drama. It may be that a lecturer feels that the best way to make the student realize the relationship between theatre and society is to make the students improvise on themes of recent developments in their own rural areas. This will then lead to a play in which the students will tour the villages, travelling in a schoolbus.

Eventually these initiatives were regarded as a kind of 'cultural democratization'; making theatre accessible to the masses instead of a small urban elite, as in the earlier colonial times. In those days, there were three principles of importance to perform 'popular theatre' at a local level:

1) the use of local cultural forms of expression such as song, dance, stories, costumes and artifacts;

2) the performance of the play in the local tongue;

3) the accessibility to a wide audience by performing in the open air and free admission.

In the seventies, another approach of development oriented theatre evolved in Botswana. Laedza Batanani is, among others, responsible for the changes in objectives of several university theatre companies during the seventies[6]. They no longer went on the road as a 'travelling circus' to provide the country with a form of culture considered to be lacking, but rather attempted to make plays, together with the rural population, that agreed with the prevailing reality of the country.

The Laedza Batanani approach in Botswana and the Zambian Chikwakwa experience have been of great influence to 'theatre for development' initiatives taken by the universities of Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Cameroun, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and South Africa[7]. However, these experiences not only have been influential to the forementioned African countries, but to other Third World countries as well, by exchanging experiences during international seminars and workshops.

Part Three:

Theatre for Development; Performing Arts as Instruments of Intervention

IX.
Theatrical Forms: Puppeteers and Crooners Participating in Mass Campaigns

The revival of the use of traditional media in contemporary development related contexts, according to Lent (1980: 145) and Awa (1983: 28), dates from the 1970s. Their use in support of national development programmes was a logical reaction to the use of the mass media in large-scale 'top-down' projects in the 1960s. It turned out that the mass media provided the people primarily with information and entertainment that was imported wholesale from the North Atlantic world. Apart from that, the mass media turned out to be too centralized, too expensive, and they required specially trained people. This meant, according to Welman (1983: 27), that there was no way for people in the lower sections of society to take part in this form of communication.

One of the development sectors which first used theatre as a means of information on a national level and in large-scale campaigns was family planning. Most large-scale and national development programmes supported with funds from UN organizations or bilateral government-to-government aid, were generally directed toward the population's bare necessities of life. This basic needs approach in the fight against poverty meant as rule fighting hunger, over-population and improving hygiene, health care etc. In these separate development sectors, therefore, to provide the first life essentials some interventions were practicised, on which the local population had quite different views. A number of these views as regards food, nutrition, health care and midwifery were described in Chapter II.

Experiments in the field of technological change and rural community development in many areas of the world have brought into sharp focus the importance of cultural factors in the acceptance or rejection of the programmes aiming at change and sponsored by external agencies (Dube 1956: 19):

> "There has been a growing realization among rural extension experts and technical assistance workers that even some of the less involved technological or economic innovations have latent cultural and social dimensions that need careful consideration of the success of these programs is to be assured".

In mid-fifties, Dube (1956: 20-21) indicated the things that could go wrong in a Community Development Project in Uttar Pradesh (India), because the proposed innovations seriously interfered with the local culture, and because the people did not wish to change their ways overnight. With respect to crops meant for consumption, for example, the introduction of a new variety of sugar-cane was established because as cash crop it made more money than the older kind. But the older kind was remembered with feelings of nostalgia for its good quality and taste. At one point even minor illnesses, such as stomach-ache and the common cold were blamed on the introduction of this new variety of sugar-cane.

New aplication of an already familiar kind of vegetation also caused problems. The people were already familiar with the growing of peas,but did not use this good source of

protein for their own consumption. The local variety had been degenerating throughout the ages, and the project staff offered sowing seed of a new variety. As it happened, the peas were mainly used as cattle fodder. The sowing seed was received, but the crops were still given to the animals.

> "Many programs are rejected not because the people are traditionally minded, conservative, or 'primitive', but because the innovations, in all their ramifications, do not fit into the total cultural setting of the community" (Dube 1956: 30).

Confronted with this kind of resistance development projects, which were perceived by the local people as cultural interventions, development agencies realized the importance of 'tailor-made' local aid programmes, in which the various sectors of development would be presented in an integrated way. According to this option, the prevention of illness means that primary health care is inseparable from such issues as agriculture, housing, sanitation, water supply, education, women's liberation and labour and wage questions, which are the basis of an adequate diet and healthy living (Tandon 1982: 11).

An example of such an integrated rural development project, in the field of food and nutrition, comes from the Coimbatore District (South India), in the first half of the sixties. The education programme resulting from a survey study was concerned with the improvement of methods of cooking vegetables and rice, with the storage and preserving green vegetables, with promoting consumption of nutritive foods such as leafy vegetables, seasonal fruits and groundnuts, with a better use of the available land and the development of gardens for the cultivation of low cost fruits and vegetables, and with methods to improve the diet of babies and small children on the basis of the available food resources (Devadas 1965: 83).

The instructional component was found mainly in visits to the local communities and door to door visits. Pictures, maps, and small exhibitions gave the proper information. The motivation to take part was stimulated by cooking contests, but also by the use of traditional forms of theatrical expression. As the percentage of illiterates was higher among the women of the village than among the male population, recourse was sought to those theatrical forms that suited the oral tradition of the women. The inherent sentimentality and melodrama were regarded as an advantage by the project leaders. The messages were supposed to move the people.

Not all the available forms were suitable for disseminating information. Some forms of expression had too powerfully religious connotations. Puppet shows, in particular, were used to display the principles of a more carefully balanced diet in simple, every-day anecdotes. Particular use was made of song and dance plays such as *villupattu, poikhal kudirai,* and *kummi.* The former two are song-and-dance plays in which men as well as women take part together. The latter is for women exclusively. In *villupattu,* a framework was presented to pursue a certain theme. The leader introduces a theme and tells stories and sings songs around that theme. The others chime in, or comment and sing.

Poikhal kudirai is a song-and-dance play for festivities and celebrations. The people dress up as traditional heroes, villains and heroines from the rich mythical and half-mythical literature from India's cultural heritage. Here too, the songs and dances are thematic and may focus on such items as nutrition. *Kummi* is a dance for women, typical of South India. Again, song and dance offer possibilities tointroduce a certain theme. To deal with the themes, fragments from Indian popular stories were often chosen in which food and nutrition were already a central issue. In the dramatizations, the character of the grandmother was especially emphasized, as in Indian daily life it is she who is the final authority in the kitchen. Get the grandmother on your side, then the rest of the women will follow, is what Devadas (1970: 15) seems to say.

Traditional performing arts were used in order to bring across developmental messages

in the field of food, nutrition, hygiene, primary health care and sanitation. The forms of theatre differed in the skills demanded from the actors. Some require highly developed theatrical skills and therefore needed professionally trained actors. Others involved amateurs and local musicians. Requirements with respect to costumes and properties varied correspondingly from extravagant costumes or masks, to the use of the village square as the setting and the human voice as the only instruments. Solo performers such as bards, puppeteers and minstrels had only their musical instruments or puppets to carry about but as soon as travelling bands or groups are formed, a logistic problem developed.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF 1972) regarded the idealistic and fully dedicated professional puppeteers as the ideal performers for the purpose of promoting birth control. But the IPPF feels that should the professional lack an idealistic approach to national development and should he be too much restricted by the traditions and conventions of his craft, then the work will have to be done by idealistic amateurs.

Puppet theatre, as a means of conveying information, required quite a lot of work before and after the performance. The follow-up is very important. For instance, the performance will be ineffective if no contraceptives are available for handing out, if there are no consultants in the area, and if there is no clinic in the vicinity. Local midwives, because of their native, traditional knowledge and skills in matters of birth, sexuality and contraception, are looked upon as authorities on the subject and can be useful co-promotors of birth control.

9.1. Mass campaigns and the traditional media: using folk theatre

In family planning campaigns and activities, the main objective is to inform and to motivate the local population to linking their own instant decision- making to the prevention of future problem solving: planning the family 'here and now' will prevent other problems (economically speaking) in the 'near' future. The various bottlenecks to be tackled in this awareness raising process have been mentioned before. These problems may be ethical or religious in nature, related to the belief system or world view of the population, including ideas about the status of women, virility, sexuality and prescribed behaviour among representatives of either sex. They may also be economic in nature, related to the homestead labour force or to securing a well provisioned old age.

Because straightforward information and messages dealing with sexuality and childbirth might be embarrassing, culturally speaking, these campaigns nowadays usually opt for an intregrated rural development approach in which health care, nutrition, agricultural extension etc. are dealt with in addition to responsible parenthood and mother-and-child care. Most of these campaigns use a multi-media approach in which use is made of various integrated communication channels. The use of mass media like radio and TV is alternated with the intensive use of 'little' media like slides, pamphlets, information meetings, demonstrations and posters. Besides these advanced media, traditional channels of communication, such as folk theatre, have been experimented with. In the Philippines (Population Forum 1976) and in Ghana in particular, rural theatre forms were used in national family planning campaigns.

In Anandapur, the use of folk poetry in information campaigns about birth-control was rediscovered and further developed. Subjective poetry was considered here to be the poetry of the population itself, which related and reflected a wide range of subjects: rural matters, health, the joy of children, the sufferings of women, and problems within a community. As these songs were composed from a participant's point of view culturally, they described the existing socio-economic problems of their audience. This poetry affirmed the identity of the target group and its self-image. As of old, these popular songs moved the listeners emotionally as well as intellectually.

After the increasing decolonisation of Africa and Asia in the 1950s and 1960s, it soon became apparent that the media that were genuinely popular with the people were of value

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for development activities. They were found to be inexpensive and widely available, popular and easy accessible to large numbers of the rural and marginalized urban populations. As Coletta has pointed out, the use of these media for the transfer of developmentally relevant messages caused culture to flourish and national cultural identity to develop at the same time. In the long run, this use of indigenous, traditional, folk or popular media was hoped to bring about a reassessment of the people's own cultural trends, transferring processes of change and encouraging the growth of cultural identity.

In Anandapur (Bangladesh), according to Roy (1981), folk poetry was experimented with in order to spread messages about birth-control. The first experiments in this field, according to Choldin (1966: 8-9), date back to the beginning of the sixties, when in the Comilla district, condoms were sold in local tea-houses and small shops, and information on the advantages of birth control activities was spread by musical duos consisting of a singer and a musician. These local duos or small ensembles were paid each day to include their messages in their repertory, which they would sing at bazars, in village squares etc. After instruction by professionals they composed their own songs, according to a question-and-answer model, in the local language. As the tea houses as well as the market squares and bazars were public places, it was the male population that was reached in this way. The women were informed by people who had been instructed by a team of traditional nurses and midwives, who in their rural tradition had always been familiar with medicinal herbs for woman's complaints and abortions.

This project, supported by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), made an integrated use of instructional media. Besides personal communication, a film, shot on location, was shown about a young couple marrying and wanting a limited number of children. Puppet shows were also experimented with.

The situation is different for genuine 'popular theatre', which I take to be those theatre genres which came into being endogenously as a reaction to the processes of change in society, such as urbanization, modernisation, changes in ethics and politics. An example of such a performing genre is Tamasha theatre in India, as an authentic, autonomous and endogenously genuine Indian popular theatre form. The themes dealt with in the stories of these theatre forms areclearly of a wordly nature and relate to every day problems that the audience have to deal with. Although we speak here of a performance by a company or a *troupe*, the fragmentary structure of the performance makes it possible to insert a song or two about the advantages of a small family in the modern context without disturbing the basic content of the play.

9.2. Farce reigns: puppetry for information and motivation

In all Asian cultures with a tradition of puppet theatre, a ritual value is attributed to the puppets. This phenomenon occurs on a large scale from Japan to Turkey. With Islam, puppet theatre - shadow theatre, hand-, stick puppets and marionettes - spread to, for example, Greece and northern Africa. In the last thirty years it has acquired a place in Africa south of the Sahara by endogenous developments, as with the Tiv in Nigeria (Hagher 1988: 18-19) or by exogenous influences such as in Botswana, as described in chapter VIII. According to Aikins (1979: 10-18), puppetry is nowadays actively promoted as a learning tool in the field of adult education in West Africa, as it was done ten years ago in India. Although puppet theatre was traditionally a means of entertainment and education in Asia and Europe, up to now little research has been done into its historical development and functioning as a means of instruction.

As with other media, puppetry is at present merely an instrument for adult educators. It still functions as an additional educational means in the difficult communication process in which new ideas and information are conveyed to young adults of a low literacy level.

Like all other means, it can communicate knowledge and provide a continuous flow of information and motivation. Compared to those, however, it has a number of additional advantages. After all, people tend to accept new ideas more readily if they come to them from a familiar source. Thus, wherever puppet theatre has a strong cultural tradition it will probably be very effective. Furthermore, the medium avoids the problem of illiteracy. Quite often the puppeteer is illiterate himself. His tradition stems from an oral culture. Although he has the status of a local (performing arts) expert, the illiteracy which he shares with the audience somehow makes him equal among fellow illiterates.

Moreover, puppet theatre is generally very flexible, offers scope for adaptation, and is therefore extremely suitable for information which aims at development. In many places, puppet shows are used as part of literacy programmes in order to convey information on food, health care, family planning, etc. Baird (s.d.: 2, 9-12) claimed that the puppets were so successful because they were puppets. If an actor performs, the people must know who he is, why he is here, who invited him, and why he knows more than others, etc. But if a puppet acts, nobody asks why.

The fact that puppets don't have an 'ego' or a 'self' could be the reason for our relative lack of embarrassment in dealing with 'delicate' matters of life through puppets. The puppeteer is apparently less censured than an actor. The puppet forms a 'buffer' between the performer and his audience.

> "Puppets affect people's hearts as well as their minds. People believe in the characters and are interested in their problems. At the same time, people separate the puppet from the person working it. The puppets can act out private situations or struggles between people without offending the audience - for example, family planning or human rights. Puppets can often criticise society in a way that people cannot always safely do" (Gordon 1986: 4).

Puppet shows in the Third World, and in some parts of Europe, are often not self-contained literary products, but rather 'skeletons', scenarios. Puppets are easily transported. Puppet theatre is performed by solo performers and requires few technical facilities. This is an advantage over means like film- and-slide projection which require electricity. The only two technical disadvantages of puppet theatre are the fact that making the puppets is a difficult craft and that performing with them demands a lot of skill. Even if a puppeteer does not earn a living with his performances, one could argue that his skill authorises him as a professional 'performer' (Aikins 1979: 12).

Puppet theatre for development purposes such as health care, nutrition, and birth control in particular has been used in various countries. Puppets the size of human beings, are used in Sri Lanka to introduce information on family-planning programmes to the villages. The initiative came from the Institute for Sinhala Culture, which has worked since 1975 on the modest introduction of birth control information in well-known folktales such as *Gotayimbara*. Furthermore, experiments were carried out with scenarios especially written for the purpose, such as for example *Tikai Hondi* ('Small is Beautiful') which were performed by well known village characters such as the priest, the monk, the landlord, the clever servant, etc. (Worrall 1977: 32 33).

In India, where shadow-, hand- and stickpuppets as well as mannekins are used, the government has been using them for a long time to spread information in rural areas. Tiwari (1969) pointed out that in Bihar (Madhya Pradesh) this medium was used to inform the population on the phenomenon of life insurances. The play had the nature of a farce, by its simple plot. The life and fortunes of Sukh Lal, a small farmer, are its central theme. He is continually at war with the local usurer, an old lecher who fancies Sukh Lal's daughter and wants to marry her. When the usurer has extorted more than Sukh Lal's entire capital from

him and the latter, against his daughter's will, almost consents to the marriage, his younger brother returns to the home. The debt is paid to the usurer from an official bankloan based on a life insurance. The usurer and his comic scheming servant leave the stage. The girl marries a prosperous man.

The puppet theatre plays about family planning, too, are rather burlesque. They usually feature a wedding, whether or not suggested and arranged by a friend. *The mystery of the underwear,* a story which was used in India, had the following plot. A *guru* receives a scarf and a loincloth as a present from his pupil. Both garments miraculously attract rats. In order to get rid of the rats the guru takes a cat. To be able to feed it milk he is forced to take a cow. The cow grazes the neighbours pasture until it is bare. A row follows. On top of all his pupil advises him to get married. The pupil acts as matchmaker. The philosophy behind the scheme is that a working wife will allow the guru to devote himself to asceticism and prayer. The wedding scene follows. In the next scene the marital home is swarming with children (reminding us of the rat plague in scene 1). The pupil advises: Why not pay a visit to a birth control clinic?

Not only in the field of birth control, but also in other development sectors puppetry has been made use of. Literacy House is a development organization in Lucknow (Northern India) which started the experimental use of puppet theatre to motivate people to be inoculatedagainst smallpox. The institute is concerned with family-planning as well as literacy promotion. Such a combination of two aspects of education is sometimes referred to as functional literacy promotion, since it teaches you reading and writing functionally by means of texts, pictures, and discussions in relation to family planning.

With financial aid from the U.S. government, Bill Baird, a famous North American puppeteer, was invited by Literacy House to produce a play in aid of birth control promotion. He wrote *Small family, happy family,* in which well known Indian characters featured in an Indian setting. The play was translated into Hindi as well as Punjabi and performed in a number of Hindu villages in Northern India. As was intended, the play was suitable for easy adaptations to other regions and cultures, and was used in Turkey where it was adapted to the Karagöz-puppet show.

Like the shadow plays in India (Sawant 1984: 100-112), the Karagöz shadow show in Turkey had a historical ritual value. Nowadays, Karagöz shadow-theatre is of a rather burlesque nature. A Karagöz performance invariably begins and ends with a dialogue between Karagöz and Hacivat, two bosom friends. In Turkey and other Islamic countries, the performances take place in the early afternoon during the Ramadan month. The puppeteer has to have a repertory of at least forty different stories to get enough contracts. The structure of the performance is generally more important than the text, which allows the puppeteer to improvise (Simmen 1975: 94-100).

In the late sixties, the Agency for International Development (AID; Washington) and the Turkish government designed a plan for the use of Karagöz to spread information on birth control. The programme was inspired by the use of puppetshows in Indonesia and India. Short Karagöz plays were produced as radio plays. Bill Baird's play, written for an Indian context, was adapted to a Turkish context. Puppeteers were instructed especially for this purpose. Their messages were mostly introduced in plays which had the amorous adventures of Karagöz as their central theme. His sexual impulsiveness was then criticized by the wise Hacivat (Lawrence 1971: 8-9).

9.3. The educative force of puppetry: encouraging people's participation in national and local campaign work

Within the context of development activities, puppetry has frequently been used to motivate people to partake in various development sectors. In Nepal puppetry was used to motivate

people to build pit latrines (World Education 1981: 24); in Ghana to participate in nutrition campaigns (Gordon 1986: ix); in Indonesia to stimulate the people to participate in reforestation projects (Schuuring 1987: 23); in Botswana to inform the people about health problems and veneral diseases.

Puppets were also used during the beginning of the seventies in Ethiopia, for nutrition education. *Sunshine is Good for Babies* was a successful puppet show by the Ethiopian Nutrition Institute. 'The leading character of the show is a very traditional old lady, who talks like everyone's grandmother, and makes all the watchers laugh when she insists that the baby's eyes and skin will be spoiled by the sun' (Hagos 1972: 6). The other three characters are the modern mother, the father, and of course the baby. This puppet show had a very wide appeal among the modern and urban audiences, as it appeared weekly on television with an eight minute programme. But apart fromthat, it also toured Ethiopia and performed at community centres.

The puppeteers had two other plays in their repertory: *Breast Milk is Best* focused the spectators' attention on the dangers of feeding from unsterilised bottles, and *Children Need Additional Food* showed how supplementary food can be prepared from local staple food. The scripts were written by a professional writer in the Amharic vernacular. Despite the fact that the puppets were dressed in Ethiopian clothes, they did not belong to a local puppet show tradition, and in this way they were free from any traditional connotation.

This trend of using especially designed theatre forms in developmental works can also be seen in the field of puppet theatre. The Literacy House (Lucknow), in particular, became widely known in India because of its literacy activities in the country. Over the last thirty years, this NGO has used puppet teams with local puppet players and traditional local puppet plays in Rajasthan as a powerful motivational unit 'to educate the rural mass in adult education, health and hygiene, co-operation, family-planning and social awareness, etc' (Paul 1984: 90-91). Moreover, here, too, the puppet shows are primarily used to motivate the members of the community to partake in adult education.

Shantar Singh is a puppeteer who, for personal motives, is completely committed to the profession of performer and is deeply socially engaged. His theatre techniques rely on traditional performance techniques with which the population is familiar. But he never directly refers to or derives from traditional forms of theatre or puppetry in Rajasthan, the area where he performs. The characters and plot lines are entirely of his own invention. The puppets he uses only marginally resemble local classical puppets.

According to Roy (1983: 5), Singh's social engagement arose when he worked as a labourer in a famine relief camp in a village in Jawaja (Ajmer District in the Indian State of Rajasthan). Together with his puppets, he first obtained a modest place in an adult education programme sponsored by the Government. Gradually his fame as a performer and educator grew, but his breakthrough only came when he managed to entertain the audience at the camel fair in Pushkar for four hours, whereas the local civil servant had only given him a permit for a performance of a quarter of an hour. The people simply insisted that he continued his act.

When the Government explicitly accepted puppetry as a means for promoting national integration and stimulated its use in all kinds of educative activities both inside and outside school under Indira Ghandi's 20-Point programme, Singh became one of the most widely asked performers to stimulate and activate target groups to dedicate themselves actively to rural development projects. He was contracted per programme or project, running a one-man business. Originally his work consisted mainly of touring schools in Rajasthan, but later he was also hired to do campaign work, as in the reforestation programme, for which he did extension work, also advertising it in the local communities.

Singh's most legendary character is Jokhim Chacha, a Muslim of three hundred years old, 'who has the audacity to call the Chief Minister of the State 'his child', the Inspector of

Schools 'my grandson', and old respected women in the village 'my daughter' and get away with it. Jokhim Chacha is in much demand' (Roy 1983: 6). Whenever a school building needs to be repaired and money has to be raised in the community, Jokhim Chacha's assistance is requested. When attendance at the evening classes of the local adult education programme diminishes, Jokhim Chacha visits the village to urge parents and adolescents to brush up their knowledge by going to school. When a family planning programme is started, Jokhim Chacha motivates the villagers. When higher castes apply untouchability to establish their supremacy over the recently installed pumps, this aged and sage character addresses his audience and approaches this delicate problem of authority from a number of angles.

Even though Singh is not afraid to speak openly about the misuse of power relations and factions in the villages, or about the local brahmins, or money lenders who keep a hold on their fellow villagers through religion or economy, he never becomes a preacher. His power to change attitudes springs primarily from his own motivation as a puppeteer and his dedication to social justice. Probably it is this integrity which, despite all his refusals of hush money offered by local landowners and money lenders, that shields him from open violence. His popularity with the rural poor and the donations from the small development agencies allow him to remain self supporting, so that he can afford to speak up.

In a totally different way, the Jesuit run Xavier Institute of Communication (XIC), located in Bombay, is engaged in research on the educative value of puppetry as an educative means[1]. XIC is primarily an educational institution that also makes minor investments in media production and research. As an educational institution, XIC conducts programmes in media training at various levels of education.

The Adult Education Project of XIC was initiated in 1974 when a group of students from the XIC broadcasting course proposed an experiment to see whether television could have an effect on improving the learning skill of adults without formal education. A metropolis such as Bombay is naturally the home of large numbers of adult poor-'marginal' members of society who have little access to formal education. XIC's programme, using the media for adult education is called ASTHA, a Marathi word meaning 'concern' (Pereira 1981: 7).

Because in India the organized mass media comprise only one section of public communication, the Institute took a great interest in the smaller media, as for example puppetry. Two kinds of puppets are used by Astha, hand puppets (also called glove puppets) and shadow puppets. These are newly designed puppets, not remakes of the traditional figures.

> "Usually the Astha puppet unit functions in this fashion: an invitation is received to present a puppet show in a neighboring school or welfare center or in a slum club" (Pereira 1982: 3).

Such a performance is not immediately concerned with reaching a specific target group or with propagating a development oriented message, but rather with proclaiming puppetry as an educative means among field workers in urban slums and among teachers. As far as the follow-up is concerned, XIC organises workshops to train slum animators and social workers in the production and the use of puppets. Puppets also play a role in XIC's further development of educative means. The institute has set out to experiment with the use of puppets as the main characters in the audio-visual teaching aids on various relevant educational subjects.

9.4. Melodrama reigns: popular theatre and family planning

South East Asia had a 'little ' theatrical tradition in rural areas running parallel to the 'great' courtly theatre tradition (Brandon 1967: 71). In the course of time, the traditional feudal relations became watered down. New theatre genres, mostly mixtures of the existent ones, developed and struck root. Modernisation and a monetary economy caused the theatre to

become commercialised. These 'recent' mixtures, which are popular in the poorer circles of society and which operate on a commercial basis, are referred to as 'popular theatre'. Examples are the Moh Lam and the Moh Lam Luong in north east Thailand and in Laos.

Moh Lam Luong is a hybridization of a number of traditional courtly and rural theatre styles, which has developed over the past eighty years, and is performed in commercial (outdoor) theatres, at regional celebrations and festivals. It is a combination of *likay* (Thai popular opera) influences in its themes and plots and of *Moh Lam* (genre of recitation from Laos involving song and music). In a traditional Moh Lam performance, the emphasis was on secular love ballads. *Likay* was concerned with epic stories. *Moh Lam Luong*, as a mixture of the two, transposes legendary epics to a contemporary context and focuses on the hero's amorous adventures. It replaces the epic style by a lyrical one and borders on melodrama.

The companies still perform on special occasions, such as private parties or local celebrations. The village council or a wealthy host can engage a Moh Lam Luong group to add to the festivities. The groups are also contracted for festivals and other occasions. In the early sixties, the American intelligence service employed Moh Lam singers to spread anti-communist propaganda in Laos (Brandon 1967: 298). Lately, Moh Lam Luong has been used in Thailand to promote family-planning. The Society of North-East Thailand Folksong Singers, which has represented all groups since 1955, facilitated the organisation of this enterprise.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF, London) in particular encouraged the use of travelling entertainers and speakers to spread information on family-planning in North East Thailand. Traditionally, Moh Lam was the 'living newspaper' of the area. A Moh Lam group reaches an audience of 5000 people a month. Travelling actors, singers, and musicians improvise music, stories, and poems on politics, marital problems, and religion. Since the actors are generally quite outspoken and straightforward on the subject of sexuality in their love-ballads, it is not difficult to have messages on family-planning conveyed in their performances.

Maharashtra State in India is rich in a popular theatre tradition: Tamasha, commonly known as *lok matya*, or people's drama. 'The Tamasha form is characterized by a loosely arranged mixture of elements which may include traditional song and dance, farcical skits, and the full-length dramatic folk plays, called *vags*. There is freedom as to the positioning of these elements, but the contents are generally designed to express the comic sentiment (...)' (Abrams 1975: 396). The Tamasha skits are simple in design and plot line. Action is more important than dialogue. The dialogue is used for witticisms and verbal jokes and to sharpen sudden changes. The acting is physical, visual and extravert.

Because the touring Tamasha ensembles were so popular among the ordinary people of Maharashtra State (India), and the performances were closer to the life experience and living conditions of a rural audience than the traditional theatre forms of the Great Tradition, the government experimented with this genre in order to spread family planning messages. The love songs the women singers used to sing were admirably suited to adaptation. In the stories of farces and dramatic folk plays *(vags)* a connection was made between love and contraceptives. A song used to sum up the message.

Tamasha theatre is a four hundred year old endogenous popular drama form in Maharashtra State (India). More than six hundred troupes are touring the villages, towns and cities performing song and dance, farcical skits, folk plays and political and social propaganda, informing the population on topics varying from agricultural technology to political ideologies and family planning. They are sponsored by the state government, and by the Song and Drama Division the Ministry of Information, and various international aid agencies including UNFPA.

The following dialogue may serve as an example how family-planning-related subjects are included in Tamasha skits (Bell 1974):

"Waghya: How can I perform tonight? I'm starving... I have a wife and eight children and a ninth is on the way. Patil : That's why India is in such a mess. Making children is the only business that seems to grow. Waghya: But isn't the government asking us to grow more?
Patil: Not in that field. They are talking about growing more food. We have enough mouths to feed as it is. Sixty thousand new children are being born every day in India.
Waghya: There's nothing wrong with that. Some of them must be dying at birth.
Patil: Some. About 28,000 die every day. That still leaves 36,000 who survive and go on eating and growing. Today 36,000 tomorrow 36,000 and the next day and the next...
Waghya: Stop! Stop! I've heard enough.
Patil: At this rate, we soon won't have any place to live and nothing to eat. Why don't you go and see a doctor? Nine children...
Waghya: I'm terrified of doctors.
Patil: Then send your wife... ."

The skit ends with a performer, portraying a social worker, singing: We've come upon hard times... Do you want to set them right? We'll have a better future, if you think of family planning. Tonight!

It was the totally flexible form genuine to Tamasha that offered the real challenges to the communicator. This performing genre, because of its flexibility of form and content, allowed a communicator to inject a contemporary message without inspiring fear (Kashyap 1976: 70).

Ghana was one of the first African countries south of the Sahara which had an official declaration of policy on population growth. The official governmental authority which carried out family planning activities in the seventies was the Ghana National Family Planning Programme (GNFPP) in collaboration with the Planned Parenthood Association and the Christian Council of Ghana (Bleek 1979: 39). According to Bame (1975), experiments were carried out in Ghana with the use of the 'concert party' in aid of these family planning programmes. The concert party is a popular theatre form in West Africa, the rise and development of which is closely connected to that of an urban culture. But in rural areas too, this drama form gained popularity. There are a number of reasons why the concert party couldbe used to spread messages about family planning.

The most important fact is that it was a popular medium, and a medium which was popular among a large part of the population. Unlike indigenous or traditional Ghanese performing arts, it was free of any ritual or religious connotations. The themes usually dealt with in concert parties are concerned with weighing new against old values and norms in a changing society, such as those of family ties and duties and those related to marital problems. The themes are dealt with and acted out in a rather melodramatic fashion, which appeals strongly to the audience's sentiments. Furthermore, the groups work on a contract, so that their work of spreading information, is -to a certain extent- for sale.

Bame (1975) dicussed at great length the effectiveness of use of comic plays in motivating the local population in Ghana towards social change.

"Bame's focus was on the use of the theatre in presenting family-planning ideas to the large population of illiterate and rural people (...). He observed that by deliberately making the plays educational by adding family planning concepts to their content, the plays became an effective and more powerful medium for disseminating the new ideas" (Msimuko and Idoye 1981: 4).

The experiments were carried out in three rural communities and indicated that the use of

humour in the plays contributed to achieving a change in attitude to family size in relation to the extended family.

In Nigeria, several theatre productions have incorporated family planning concepts into their content. The most spectacular of these plays centred around the theme of family planning is Kola Ogunmola's *My Brother's Children*. This play, which was originally performed for the International Family Planning Association, is preserved on film. *My Brother's Children* belongs to the performing genre known as the Yoruba Opera and its purpose is to inform the Yoruba speaking people of Nigeria, of the importance of family planning (Msimuko and Idoye 1981: 5).

9.5. Beyond tradition: using familiar and newly designed allegorical characters.

In South Africa, the indigenous Xhosa song tradition was used, according to Fehrsen (1979: 123), in order to give information about nutrition. It is striking, however, that in these development projects, more than in family planning projects, attention is paid to new theatre forms especially designed for the campaigns. In my brief description of nutrition campaigns in India, I mentioned the use of skits which no longer had anything to do with the traditional theatre forms. This was the case in a fictional argument about the pros and cons of new views on nutrition between a woman and her mother-in-law.

But there are also other ways to go beyond the traditional theatrical conventions of the rural illiterates. A recent 1983 production of the Indian Centre for Communication and Cultural Action (CCCA) aimed, according to Burns (1984: 172) at the suddenly changing and threatened economy of small fishing villages along the Bay of Bengal. Living conditions were threatened because the Indian government had allowed foreign 'floating fish factories' to empty their waters. The performances showed a revision of Pushkin's *The Fisherman and the Goldfish*, in which allegorical characters were introduced such as Greed, Multi-National, Co-operation and Collective Action, and the inhabitants were not just urged to reflect on their own situation but primarily to come to collective action.

Similar use of allegorical characters was made in Guatamala. Here, the US Peace Corps Volunteers used the Travelling Road Show to draw the attention in the rural villages to the importance of the consumption of vegetables. Their immediate audience were children, but the attending parents formed the real target group, which had to be reached in an unconspicious way. The actors used dramatized pieces, alternated with clownish scenes and songs to drive home their message.

The story line of their show was concentrated on the little girl Conchita and her friends, 'the vegetables', who sang and danced and wanted to be friends with their young audience because they were so good for their health. Basic hygiene, was also put into the show. Using puppets, 'the vegetables' also explained why it was so important to plant a new tree for every tree that was cut down. Another part of the show was dedicated to the importance of growing vegetables on terrace land.

Also in Guatamala, drama was used (towards the end of the seventies) by rural health workers *(promotores)* in order to motivate and stimulate the local population for the national inoculation campaign. This was a collaboration between the Center for International Education (School of Education) of the University of Massachusetts and the government of Guatemala. It was particularly the American staff who helped the local promotores with the use of drama for propaganda. In this project experiments were carried out with, among other things, allegorical characters. The play, as described by Abrams (1979) gives an impression of a performance in the village of Palama in the *altiplano*, the high plateau, of Guatamala.

In the first scene a *promotora* visits the houses of a local village on behalf of the vaccination campaign, and meets with a number of objections the local population have to the inoculation of their children. After the shots the children often fall ill, the population complains; the

clinic is often too far to go for an injection; or the mother is too busy with her duties to take her children to the clinic for a inoculation. In the second scene we see a number of women fetching water and meanwhile discussing the pros and cons of vaccination. Scene three takes place at the health post. The nurse and the health technician only speak Spanish, so a *promotor* is obliged to translate (into) the local Indian Cakchiquel. The rest of the dialogues are in fact in the local language.

This scene is intended to give as much information as possible about vaccination. The characters representing the Indian women arrive with their babies (dolls) at the health post. Somebody in the wings imitates the crying of the babies after the vaccination. Scene four has virtually no dialogue, but it has a lot of action. It concerns the fight between the personified 'microbes' and the babies, of whom some are inoculated and others are not, back in the home village. The characters representing the microbes are identifiable by their horrifying masks. These 'microbes' threaten the small infants. The symptoms of the diseases are shown clearly in the infants that are not vaccinated. The vaccinated infants survive the battle, and, their hands clasped above their heads as victors, leave the stage. We see the unvaccinated children die a miserable and slow death on stage.

In the last scene there follows another discussion among the villagers on the use of vaccination. The difference between thechronic sufferers and the healthy characters is made clearly visible by the shaking and coughing of the diseased of the village. The changes between the scenes are marked by music and songs on health related themes. At the end of the performance, a song is presented about the vaccination campaign.

Breast feeding is a frequently recurring item in nutrition education. The problem here, is in fact that the women want to appear modern and will accept anything the commercial enterprises in question tell them. As part of a child-to-child programme in Ajoya (Mexico), school children investigated the situation in their own homes. The survey showed that diarrhoea occured 5 times as often when babies were bottle-fed as when they were breast-fed. As a result the parents were shocked and some women decided to make a dramatization of the issue, in order to make the other women of the village aware of this problem. The health workers of the village assisted in putting on the play.

In the play, described by Werner (1983: 72-75), the actresses used babies that were cut of card-board and painted. The names of the four characters were allegorical. Charity is the village health worker, Vanity a rich woman, and Modesty and Prudence two poor women. One day Modesty and Vanity meet on the street and chat about their babies, who happen to have born in the same week. Prudence joins them. The subject shifts to the feeding of babies. Modesty has decided to bring up her baby on the bottle, since she has heard so much about it on the radio. But it is going to cost her a pretty penny to buy the milk. She will have to add a lot of water. Vanity too bottle feeds her baby, because that is more convenient and because, as she adds jocularly, 'My breast won't sag'. Prudence disagrees. In her family all babies are breast-fed, and as a result the babies only grow stronger and healthier.

Modesty and Vanity laugh at Prudence and find her hopelessly old-fashioned. But a month later Modesty and Vanity meet again, and Vanity is forced to admit that her infant continually suffers from diarrhoea. They meet Prudence again, who has a beautiful baby. Modesty would like to breast feed her baby, but she has stopped giving milk. Prudence tells her to seek advice from the village health worker Charity, who informs her how she can produce milk again carefully. After a month Modesty and Prudence meet each carrying a perfectly healthy baby. At that moment Vanity passes by. She is in mourning. Her baby has died. She confesses her vanity and swears that she will breast feed her next baby.

9.6. Final remarks

Obviously, the folk and popular media easily gain access to the mass media. Presenting folk

and popular media to a wider audience through the mould of the mass media, as Katz (1977: 119) puts it, globalizes culture but at the same time minimalizes its individual chances of survival in its authentic form. Adaptions and secularization of this type have not only affected Japanese wrestling but also Thai *mau lum* (popular opera), the performances of Senegalese *griot* (popular chroniclers), Javanese *wayang* (puppet theatre), Japanese *kabuki*, and the traditional storytelling in Iranese teahouses.

Apart from the influence the mass media exceed on the folk and popular media, there is also the political pressure which might influence form and contents. Because there is no great dividing line between development objectives and a government's political objectives, it often happens that these local micro media are alsoused for the promotion of political programmes that in the end were of little benefit to the population. Orr (1974: 78) has illustrated this by indicating that puppet theatre in Vietnam and Laos was used both by the communists and by the United States Information Agency in order to win over the rural population.

Therefore, it might be helpful according to Roy (1981) to distinguish between objective and subjective poetry. Subjective poetry is written from the inside, by the participants of the community. Objective poetry is written from an 'outsider's point of view, and describes rural life from the viewpoint of outside expert. It introduces options in order to change things, which it is up to the population to accept or reject. Besides that it gives information on how to bring about changes, with or without intervention or aid from organizations outside the community.

> "A mistake often committed by well-meaning extension workers in agriculture or publicity officers attached to family planning programs in developing countries is the dictation to village artists on how to convey a modern message. The better way would be to convince the folk artist of the meaningfulness of the intended message, and give them free rein to present it in a manner that they deem fit. If folk artists are persuaded by the value of the message, they would translate it into dramatic terms in a way that an outsider, however well-intentioned, cannot hope to accomplish" (Dissanayake 1977: 124).

At the beginning of this Chapter, I described the use of puppet theatre and of traditional songs, music and dance in India in order to introduce development oriented issues. In India, for example, experiments were made with temple based conservative performing arts. Some of them were ritualistic, and all enjoying great popularity and imitation. One of them was the repertoire of Yellamma songs, which enjoy popularity in the northern districts of Karnataka, in central South India:

> "The Yellamma song of Karnataka, the Nagnriya of Mangalore, and the Vaidyana Kunita are examples of rigid folk media that reject any message not already within it. In fact attempts to inject family planning message into Yellamma song failed so tragically that the audience angered sought to beat the singer for tampering with the usual familiar theme" (Kashyap 1976: 69).

These songs, dedicated to the goddess Yellamma, initially seemed the most suitable traditional theme carriers to bring across messages on birth control. Although extremely popular and flexible, this body of songs did not accept any external changes, that were automatically recognized by the rural people as alien, who therefore rejected the message as sacrilegious.

In a sense, this problem was encountered in Indonesia in the use of *wayang* for large-scale and centrally initiated propaganda campaigns. To begin with, the public was hardly enthusiastic about instructions from above or from outside. When a *dalang* all-too-willingly lent his

services to government propaganda, he ran the risk of losing his popularity and hence his means of living.

However, traditional and folk theatre genres, despites their rigid structure, their vast body of themes, their stock characters and stock story outlines and plots, have always left room in their performancesfor improvisation which could combine and do justice to today's problems and the themes that are presented. This is the case in a theatre form such as Karagöz in Turkey, because, according to And (1979: 95), it uses a loose, episodic structure in which discontinued, fragmentary scenes woven together do not require the compulsive attention of the audience; improvisation plays an important role in the immediacy and success of this theatre form; it is open to audience participation, and it is open to the inclusion of contemporary themes alive among the audience.

Obviously puppets only speak and act when someone makes them come to life. The puppets themselves have no capacity for anything whatsoever. What they say represents the thoughts of the puppeteer. In order to make the people also aware of this fact, puppets should represent realistic characters, and should never become supernatural beings with superhuman qualities and powers.

The American puppeteer Bill Baird, therefore, suggested designing new characters for puppets in those areas where the old puppet tradition is still (traditionally) socially or religiously biased. In this chapter I dealt with the introduction of the puppet theatre in Ethiopia, as it was used to bring across information on child care. In Nepal such a 'new' especially designed puppet show was used in order to motivate the population to dig pit latrines (World Education 1981: 24). In Ghana Gordon (1986: ix) developed special puppetshows to motivate the people to take part in development activities concerning food and nutrition. It is significant, however, that no use was made of an existing puppet tradition, but that a new kind of puppet show was especially made for these campaigns. This meant that neither the characters, nor the stories referred to the old existing puppet tradition.

X.
Learning Approaches: Shifting from Sector Policy in National Campaigns to Target Group Policy in Local Development Projects

Most activities connected with development projects involve non-formal forms of education, mainly in the field of adult education. Over the last twenty years, a great deal has been written and said about non-formal education. One of the points of criticism is that non-formal education has tended to reflect the objectives and organization of the vertically structured school education. For this reason the learners had little opportunity to participate actively in their own learning process and to point out to the educators that the learning contents did not suit their everyday working experience. To change this situation the central problem of educational research had to be tackled. That is to say, those who were receiving training, information or being otherwise educated, themselves started to play a part in the research process, identifying what they needed to learn and how it should be taught.

The research required here was not the extensive, 'value-free', pure scientific research in which the subject (the people) would have nothing to say about the research process. Nor was it a pilot study or feasibility study in which the project's hypotheses would be tested and on the basis of which a detailed and perhaps long-term policy plan could be worked out. Nor was it the regular project monitoring involved in 'evaluative research' or 'feedback research', that would allow for adaptation, in the course of the project, as a result of unexpected events and side effects. What was required was 'participatory research' or 'action research'[1], which is carried out for and by the target group itself as a part of its learning process. It is thus generally practical, of short duration, and directed towards the action to be undertaken.

In action research the researchers are at the same time the research subjects and on the basis of research results they are supposed to take action to improve their own situations. In this, they are generally supported by what we could call socio-cultural workers or extension officers. In some parts of the world, these front line workers are referred to as 'animators'[2], 'monitors', 'catalysts', 'promoteres' or 'facilitators'. Participatory research thus resembles applied or policy-oriented research, except that the initiative is not taken by an outside researcher or scientific research institute or by the government, but is stimulated to be formulated and undertaken by the people themselves.

According to Kidd and Byram (1978: 1), this research must meet at least four demands if it is to qualify as participatory. Participation is both the end and the means of the research. In the research process, the transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes should be perceived as dynamic and as a process of two-way communication. The researcher is at the same time 'participant' and 'animator' in the research process. Finally, the research should be an instrument for raising the critical awareness of the participants and should give impetus to autonomous social change. Because in this approach the participants are central to the research process, Fordham (1980: 117-131) referred to it as a 'anthropocentric research method'.

10.1. Conscientization, adult education and community theatre

In the first half of the seventies, the Center for International Education (University of Massachusetts) started a non-formal education project in Ecuador in which educative approaches, methods and techniques were facilitated as well as tested. The project, by preference aimed at rural areas, was financed by the US Agency for International Development (AID). When the project staff first integrated *teatro campesino* as an educative means in its projects in 1973-1974, it used, according to Moreno (n.d.: 4) the following working definition of theatre: theatre is 'an artistic form, unstructured and spontaneous, that offers the *campesino* who wants to participate, an opportunity to portray real situations without being threatened by consequences.'

Their principle was that when artistic expression is made in a harmonious environment in which the group can identify itself with the theme of the performance, of which the questions and results are open to discussion, such a performance then also serves as a tool in a learning process. It allowed the group to try alternatives which they had not thought of beforehand. They had to be performances which represented the factual living situations of the community. Moreover, they also had to serve as entertainment.

Of course, theatre had been produced locally. Now and then local teachers organized performances for the villagers on the occasion of festivities within the community. Usually this concerned the rendering of legends or elements of history, moralising and melodramatic blood-and-thunder plays about adultery, or farces. The field staff hoped, by producing different plays, to have the local audience partake in a broader discussion which especially concerned their own living conditions. Theatre would then be used as an educative means in literacy and numeracy programmes and for social education. The experiment was aimed at the question of whether theatre could contribute as an alternative means to consciousness raising as formulated by Paulo Freire.

Before actually starting to work with *teatro campesino*, those in charge of the project had preliminary talks about the use of theatre as an educative means with some professional and semi-professional groups in Quito, such as La Barricada and the Teatro de Ensayo, attached to the Casa de Cultura. The project management, under the leadership of a community facilitator, composed a group of peasants from San Miguel.

The project experimented with five different theatrical forms of expression. Besides puppet shows, *campesino* theatre, socio-drama[3], 'empirical' theatre and *Cabezone* were used. The latter made use of giant masks (heads) of three feet high. Wearing the Cabezones, the actors, onarriving in a community, advertised their activities to the general amusement of children and adults.

The themes and stories of both the puppet shows and the *teatro campesino* performances were determined in consultation and co-operation with the population of the villages. After the performing group had reached an agreement on the topic, they went out to look for a suitable place to play. Usually this was in the open air or a public place, such as a park, the square, the school or the church. Before the actual performance, an introductory visit was payed to the community to get to know the ins and outs of the locally present problems and to exchange ideas about the performance.

According to Moreno (n.d.: 6-7 and 15) the themes usually arose from incidents that had occurred in the community. At the request to depict themes such as the abuse of power by the authorities, the community came up with themes such as the communal work of the hamlets, the bureaucratic difficulties of the erection of a school, the problem of family planning, migration difficulties and illiteracy. That was why the performances and the problems they dealt with were discussed with the audience afterwards.

Regularly, the puppeteer did not use more than a table on its side or two chairs draped with a poncho. But a window or a door could also serve for a setting. During the performances

the puppets talked to one another as if they were addressing an audience. This made it possible for a puppet to ask somebody from the 'audience' to read out a letter.

As an appropriate play was lacking, the performance group decided to make a dramatization of the photonovel *Between Love and Hope*, because this was one of the most widely read *fotonovelas* of the moment. The people knew the plot and the characters. The aim of the use of this source was, according to Moreno, (n.d.: 11-12) 'to reaffirm what the fotonovella said, so that the community would be made more aware of the problems represented in the novel'. How was this play created? First, everybody read it separately. Then the novel was discussed and everybody decided which parts would suit him/her most. The characters' stage reactions were talked about, as well as the alternative endings of the play. Aim: 'reconstructing the photonovella and creating the characters, but always maintaining the central theme'. After about a month, the rehearsals were over. During this month a number of observations were made and changes were incorporated to make the dialogue more flexible and lively. Finally, the production was ready and a series of performances was organized in various rural communities. The facilitator made an introductory round of the villages they intended to visit to canvass the play with the population.

After the performances, the greater number of the visited communities were asked to act out small plays themselves inspired by what they had seen and based on something similar that had happened in the community recently. The facilitator had already conferred with the population on this, so that the people were reasonably well informed on what to expect or were even able to make suggestions. These short dramatizations were also stimulated at times when the discussion tended to become too abstract. It enabled the audience to project its thoughts in concrete forms.

Besides, this project made use of what the project co-ordinator called 'empirical theatre'. This form is based on immediate and spontaneous experiences that involve the public without their realizing that they are part of the action. In this case, the actors provoked the involvement by causing an agitation against their colleagues' depiction from admidst the audience. These were risky and painful experiences which required great skill on the part of the actors in order to keep their situation under control. As soon as the audience had quietened down they were immediately asked about the reasons for their reactions.

In Ecuador, puppet and *campesino* theatre were often combined. The contents of the performed plays were more or less the same, but there was a clear difference in form. First the puppet show was presented. The audience were allowed to play with the puppets in order to get accustomed to participation. This was followed by working with actors and the introduction of socio-drama or 'empirical theatre'. The aim of using several theatrical forms remained the same: personal development, human progress and social awareness. Before the performances took place, the cooperatives, the peasant associations, or other organized groups which served as intermediaries or spokes persons were contacted. The show was not organized for a distinct group, but for and by the full community and for anybody who wanted to see it or participate in it (Moreno n.d.: 17-18).

The performances raised divergent reactions in the various villages. The bulk of the reactions was favourable. However, occasionally people felt intimidated by this form of theatre, especially when it represented a certain authority. Once it even happened that the car of the actors was hit by stones thrown by the local political leader.

10.2. Self-sufficiency in self-help projects: helping communities to help themselves

The mid seventies saw in Bumpe Chiefdom in the south of Sierra Leone (West Africa) the beginning of a comprehensive extension programme, which had its basis in the Serabu district hospital, and which was concerned with primary health care for the rural communities in the neighbourhood, where the majority of the villagers were subsistence farmers. At a local level,

health committees were formed consisting of local 'barefoot experts' in the field of anaemia, diarrhoea, and vomiting. Afterwards, their interest was raised in health promoting activities such as sanitation, immunization, water supply, housing, agriculture, endemic disease control and general social welfare, after which they went out to motivate their fellow villagers to participate in these activities.

Yet after some time it turned out that this model was not as effective as had been hoped. Somehow the medical work never went beyond a kind of first aid, and its goal, the participation and emotional involvement of the population in their own health problems, was never arrived at. This was blamed on short-comings of the educational management of the project, and it was considered which educative methods could motivate the population for objectives of the project. It was decided to experiment with short dramatic performances to be shown to the population.

Three short skits were put together which were concerned with neo-natal care, tetanus, tuberculosis, and bottle feeding. The story line was decided on, the characters were created, there were a few rehearsals, and then there was the performance. The community health nursing students who had invented and played the skits enjoyed doing it very much, especially since the characters they played were so familiar to them from their own community background: the corrupt chief, the visiting sanitary inspector, the emotional teenager, the interfering mother-in-law, and the weary farmer (Edwards 1981: 88). The skits were first tried out in the children's ward of the hospital, but the news had travelled fast, and patients from other wards came to watch too.

Then the skits were tried out in the villages. The performance took place in the central *barrie* (local courtroom) lit by some bush lamps. After the performance the audience were not asked to stay, yet people lingered about and questions arose on medical subjects that had been presented in the performances. Virtually every topic that was part of the health care programme turned out to be suitable somehow for incorporation in a playlet: from the use of indigenous medicine to the fight against hookworm. Songs on health problems of local concern were put to traditional melodies, and were sung as soon as the group arrived at the village.

The plays were usually concerned with the way in which health-related problems were solved with in the extended families. After all, this was the level on which the problems were dealt with in reality. So there were always one or two scenes in which the family and village conflicts were expressed in relation to, for example, the herbalist, the native healer, the fortune teller,or in relation to hookworm or bottle feeding. The characters, such as the chief, the mother, the teenager, the elder, the herbalist, and the nurse were chosen in such a way that the discussion that usually arose among the kith and kin, and the ensuing dilemmas, could easily be put on stage. Further, the choice of characters was made with a view to a possible ensuing discussion on health-related themes, as well as on the basic dilemm among family and relatives in opting for the indigenous or the medicated treatment.

The villagers were very taken with the skits. Not only the songs, but long stretches of action, dialogue, and argumentation could be reproduced by the audience a year later, when the arguments put forward in the discussions were still fresh in the spectators' minds. The ensuing discussions were heated but constructive. People were prepared to begin local problem solving as far as health care was concerned, and also to act collectively. As a result of the performances on hookworm anaemia, a start was made with the building of latrines, and the nurse was asked her opinion as to the best site. The granny midwives started to encourage pregnant women to attend clinics for their tetanus shots, mothers were able to identify anaemia in their children and the health committee established a rule in the village requiring all women and children to be immunized (Edwards 1981: 89). Government agricultural extension officers, inspired by this approach, experimented with a play on the safe use of insecti-

cides, and the social welfare worker tried his hand at a playlet concerning the prevention of malnutrition.

The People's Educational Association (P.E.A.) is a Ghanese NGO that lacks the funds to finance local projects, but that has the funds to send small teams to local communities in order to learn about their needs and to motivate them for a strategy of self-help. In 1977 such an inventory was made in the easternmost province. In the little town of Okorase, clean and drinkable water was the highest priority. To achieve this, however, the building of a four mile trench to put the piping in was required. The population were already reconciled to the fact that they had neither the ability, nor the will power to raise this money collectively, and were convinced that the government would be not interested.

After the arrival of the P.E.A. and ensuing deliberation, it was decided to send to the Water and Sewage Corporation a delegation consisting of two P.E.A. members and two village leaders. During a second visit to this institution, the proposal to provide funds was not met with unwillingness, but the delegation was referred to the Regional Commissioner who had the final authority to approve the project. During the ensuing talk with this authority, the health implication of a sanitary water supply and the readiness of the population of Okorase to provide communal labour were strongly emphasized. The Commissioner and the delegation agreed that the state would bear the cost of the material on the condition that the village itself would take care of construction.

It was agreed upon that the village would take the project into its own hands. Tools were gathered or borrowed, and the digging started. There were a lot of set backs, such as natural obstacles in the digging route, and the 'miraculous' disappearance of pipes. But after a few months the piping was finished, which gave occasion for a day long celebration, which the Commissioner had consented to attend. It was P.E.A.'s opinion, however, that this celebration should not be the end, but the beginning of new ventures. The chief agreed and a theatre performance group was formed. The main problems of Okorase, consisting of unsanitary solid waste disposal and the lack of a health clinic, were identified, the characters decided upon, the story lines written, and after a few rehearsals the playlets were ready to be put on stage. The quite comic skits were alternated with drumming, singing and dancing.

> "In the first skit a big shot from Accra returns to his home village Okorase to donate a large sum of money to the local development committee. Feeling nature's call, he unsuccessfully seeks a place to relieve himself. He becomes increasingly discomforted, much to the amusement of several villagers who wonder aloud why the bush is no longer good enough for him. Finally, the big-shot flees Okorase without making his donation. Later, each of the people who laughed at him is stricken with some form of faecal contamination disease. They are now eager to consider the proposed solution: using inexpensive water-sealed toilets to keep flies off the faeces. In the second skit, a delegation approaches the chief for help in starting a clinic. The chief is not interested. He argues that medical attention is available in Koforidua, four miles away. He does not want people to think he is making unreasonable demands for communal labour or monetary contributions. During these discussions, a messenger bursts in and throws himself at the chief's feet. The chief's son has just been bitten by a snake. Everyone rushes frantically to find a way to get the boy to the hospital in Koforidua, but before a vehicle can be located, the boy dies. In his grief, the chief sees the error of his ways. He gathers the towns people together and begs them to contribute money and labour to build a clinic so no other parent will have to suffer as he has. He also appoints a delegation to negotiate with the regional medical officer for drugs and personnel" (Frankel 1981: 4).

The Commissioner had not missed the messages of the two skits. This encouraged P.E.A. and the elder villagers to start negotiations with the regional medical officer. As the clinic that Okorase wanted was more concerned with preventive than with curative health care, funds were made available. The drugs were supplied by UNICEF. The opening of the clinic was attended by delegates of the regional government and of the United States Agency for International Development (US-AID). The broadcasting organization from Accra had also arrived.

Again, the P.E.A. urged that this festive meeting should also be a reason to start a new self-help project. It was decided once more to use drama. The problem dealt with in this new play was an improved electricity supply.

10.3. Creative dramatics: theatre of the oppressed in the Philippines

In the Philippines under the martial law of the Marcos' regime, the 'Creative Dramatics Programme'[4] was initiated in Mindanao-Sulu, supported by the non-governmental organization Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference Secretariat (MSPCS). The programme originated out of the need for alternative and effective methods of gospel preaching and awareness-raising or conscientization in the 1970s. As in so many other countries of the Third World, the people in this part of the Philippines suffered incessant injustice because the economic, political and cultural systems of the country were entirely in the hands of an elite minority, a situation which worsened after the introduction of martial law in 1972[5].

Censorship made it possible for the authorities to interpret any critical comment on the dominant social order as an act of subversion or rebellion. Freedom of speech was suppressed. Censorship and intimidation eliminated the power of the press, radio and TV, and progressive stations were closed down. As a result, it became necessary to look for useful micro media through which to propagate awareness activities. At the 1977 conference of Filipino bishops, MSPCS had pronounced itself in favour of promoting such activities and of organizing the oppressed and impoverished people. It had accordingly initiated funds, provided room to work, and stimulated initiatives for the development of micro media in the interest of awareness raising and problem solving. According to Sustento (1980: 34) MSPCS used 'micro media' to refer to blackboard papers, stencilled parochial bulletins, photos, slides, posters, comics and caricatures, songs, poems and, finally, theatre. With the exception of photos, slides and comics, micro media were on the whole produced by non specialists, that is to say by the local population.

A central element in the use of micro media was that they are rooted in, and find their impetus in, the rural communities and urban slums. Form and content were decided by the needs of the community and by local forms of expression in order to avoid alienation from the people's cultural background. Authentic means available within the community, such as song and dance, were therefore used to their fullest potential. Another important element was the participation of the local population. In the learning process the animator refrained from assuming a dominant role in order that the community might be stimulated to make its own decisions. The hope was that such involvement would liberate the people from their 'culture of silence', and that they would take pride in their own forms of expression. A third element was the impetus towards self-reliance in order that the activities might be continued after the departure of the animators. This was encouraged by using a technology that was adapted to the location (simple stage lighting, if any; simple printing techniques), by using the creative potential among the community, and by working in the local language or dialect. Finally, in the overall approach, the aim was to realize the pedagogical ideas of Paulo Freire as regards awareness raising, problem solving and collective action.

Similar to the macro media, the micro media experienced the constraints imposed by martial law. The media workers were frequently confronted with raids, investigations, arrests,

closures. On the other hand, the decentralized aspect of these local initiatives made it difficult for the oppressors to know what was going on, just as difficult as it was for the organizers to coordinate the activities on a regional level. Despite all this, the organizers gave their support to the local initiatives taken by groups that were involved with awareness raising and education by means of micro media, in particular with the use of traditional media andforms of expression. Finally, training was provided for local people in communication techniques and skills (slides, photos, etc.) as well as in 'creative drama'. On the local level, the use of micro media and of creative drama in particular was put into the hands of community leaders so that the people could set up their own productions.

From its origins in the early 1970s, the creative drama programme has been seen as an instrument of 'conscientization' (i.e. awareness raising) (Van Erven 1987: 135). Within the communities it has promoted the development of theatre groups and productions that have made the people conscious of their situation. This applied even to the liturgical plays that were performed in churches. During its first five years, the programme's objective was to call local groups into being and to monitor them. Before the introduction of martial law, small companies thus travelled freely, loudly proclaiming their critical comments, and exchanging ideas with the local people. This provided momentum to the development of liturgical plays based on parables, allegories and analogies. Even during performances in church, however, the presence of the local para-military superintendent invariably meant difficulties for the performers.

Such theatrical activities, which were intended to promote the conscientization of the people, tended towards 'instant theatre' or 'impromptu theatre' on the one hand, and to subversive guerrilla activities on the other. To avoid actors being arrested, detained and beaten, performances were given in the church or market place, with few props or costumes. The starting time was made known by word of mouth and people would accumulate in the market place. Look-outs were posted who, at the merest indication of danger, would signal to actors and audience to mingle inconspicuously with the crowd. In a church things were easier to control: people had to enter through the main entrance, making it easier to be screened.

Later, the shortage of personnel forced the organizers to start training the local trainers and to encourage local people to take the initiative. To this end, a bilingual handbook for localtrainers was written which contained dramatic forms, techniques and exercises that derived from Augusto Boal's theatre experiences in Peru and from Ross Kidd's experiences in Botswana. It was remarkable how this new approach (aimed at a multiplier effect) caused local theatre groups to proliferate. These were now trained by their local trai ners, directors or tutors who, in their turn, had been trained by MSPCS in close collaboration with the Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA). This approach has contributed towards a new development in the creation of socially engaged songs and poems. Some local directors experimented with techniques such as socio-drama in order to set up or revive non governmental village organizations.

At the end of the 1970s, the creative drama approach was systematically evaluated for the first time in Mindanao-Sulu. The overall conclusion was somewhat negative in that creative drama did not yet appear to make a sufficient contribution to solving local problems. The principal reasons for this were that the approach was insufficiently integrated into the aid programmes of Social Action Centres; that plays were still of a liturgical and allegorical nature and did not provide support for reflection and action; that the approach was focused too much on dramatic forms and acting techniques; that local leaders did not fully realize the value of creative drama; and that the audiences still experienced the performances chiefly as entertainment. All these points were considered to be due to weaknesses in the approach: for example, insufficient attention was given to teaching techniques in the organization of groups. The lack of variety of styles and techniques made for a one-sided approach, made it

seem radical. Other disappointments included lack of staff, of financial means, of research into results on local and national levels, and of the support by several factions of the church. Only in some villages had the creative drama programme escaped these drawbacks and brought about the desired effect.

The evaluation also produced a number of positive aspects. Creative drama appealed to the villagers,as had already been evident from the abundance of potential local trainers who applied for the courses. It appealed also because it was used as a means to analyse actual social problems. Compared to other micro media, creative drama more easily leads to initiatives and is easier to integrate into existing aid programmes. Moreover, it is the best micro medium for illiterates.

10.4. Theatre for, by and of the target group: women and employment in Jamaica

In 1972 Michael Manley's government came to power in Jamaica. His politics were carried out from an anti-imperialistic standpoint in all sectors of social life. During his term of government, experiments were undertaken with democratization in industry, agriculture, education and community activities. Initiatives from the people were encouraged and participation stimulated.

This short term of socialist government has yielded a number of positive net results for several basic groups of society, including women. For instance, the Special Employment Programme which concentrated particularly on women at the bottom of the social and economic scale, created about 10,000 minimum wage jobs for women, who thus not only gained a regular income but also won more social security.

In 1977, after first having been employed as street sweepers, and later on trained as teachers' assistants, thirteen women gave a public performance at the Workers' Week Concert in Kingston about the foundation of a union among woman labourers in a textile factory. It was not their shared profession as such which made them decide to found a theatre collective but rather their shared class consciousness. They found support for their productions at the Jamaican School of Drama (Kingston). The group called itself Sistren, meaning 'sisters'.

Supported by funds of the Jamaican Women's Bureau, the Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO), some donations from industrial circles andwith the help of the Jamaican Agency for Public Services and the Jamaican School of Drama, their production *Downpression get a Blow* had its first night in the Barn Theatre in Kingston. The play was based on the working experience of one of the group members in a textile factory. The factory had been in the hands of a foreign (American) company which had refused to pay the women more than twelve dollars a week. She had tried to induce her working-class colleagues to demand better labour circumstances. When the company got wind of it, a few people were made redundant. But before that time the initiator had become pregnant and had been sent home without further payment. In the meantime the women had succeeded in getting support for their campaign in a wider public. Then from one day to the next the company's board of directors had disappeared.

It was a short play which was not based on a written text or scenario, and which had been put together for a manifestation. But Sistren acquired a taste for it and under supervision of Honour Ford-Smith of the Jamaican School of Drama they received further training during various theatre workshops. In 1978, the collective produced its first big production, *Bellywoman Bangerang*. It offered the audience insight into the experiences of four different women in their first pregnancies. This play was also developed through improvisations and based on personal experiences. In a comic but also unsentimental way it gave attention to motherhood and daughterhood in Jamaican society. Between the lines it connected poverty, unemployment and sexual violence. The play toured the rural communities and was warmly received everywhere.

Bellywoman Bangerang not only gave an impression of folk traditions, but also integrated techniques from that tradition into the performance. Children's songs and folk stories were interchanged with personal anecdotes. And the narration and enactment of one childhood memory spontaneously brought to mind personal memories among the other Sistren members. A concentration of associatively coherent youth stories arose and so the entire process of the Jamaican woman growing up was thus depicted, including the taboos with respect to sexuality, menstruation, illness, etc.

The build-up of children's games was used as a dramatic metaphor from which the narrative structure of *Bellywoman Bangerang* was derived. The conflicts of the play coincided with, or were analogous to, the moments of conflict in games. In particular riddles and proverbs current in Jamaican oral literature were used for transitions.

From the beginning it has been Sistren's explicit wish not only to perform for women, but also to work with women from their own 'ghettos' in workshops. Encouraged by the Women's Bureaus, Sistren supervised a few workshops in the country of which the results were often put together in short presentations. Thus *Dawta Do It Yourself* arose, a short piece on the experience of a group of rural women who form a co-operative.

After some film and television work Sistren's next production was focused rather on the search for folk heroines within Jamaica's historical and national identity. Although Jamaica is still looking for a description of its inherent cultural identity, throughout the centuries it has been mainly women who have kept and transmitted the exterior of this identity. In the stories of oral tradition, usages and customs are chiefly transmitted to the children by women.

Sistren found its heroin, Nanny, a legendary female *Maroon* leader who fought for resettlement of escaped plantation slaves in the free zones. Later the Maroons obtained the right of self-determination over a small part of the island where they still live a culturally and physically secluded life. The play *Nana Yah* (1980) tried to show how the identity of a people can grow from the cultural heritage and a history of its own, which it partly owes to the first freedom fighters on Jamaica.

The incident on which Queenie, Pearlie and Hopie, or the performance QPH is based is when the Alms House caught fire and collapsed on May 20, 1980 burning 167 women. The play is a memorial to the poorest of the poor among the women of Kingston. The building did not catch fire, as was originally believed, because of vandalism but because of neglected maintenance. The play is no ordinary memorial. From the way in which the Sistren put the play on stage, the tragedy of these women is not so much the fire in which they died, but rather the circumstances which made them end up in the Alms House.

That is why *QPH* confronts us with three characters, all of whom tell their own life story, each giving reason why she ended up in the Alms House: fictional confessions on stage. First, there is Hopie who was a domestic servant for her niece Sissy for over thirty years. After being fired she ends up as a woman beggar in the Alms House. Then we have Pearlie's life story. She was once the future bride of a consulate's son. But 17-year-old Pearly appears to be pregnant by the gardener. Later in life we see Pearlie in a bar near the harbour hanging around the neck of a sailor. She is drunk. The scene finishes with Pearlie screaming that she has paid society and that she now wants to live in the Alms House at the expense of society.

Finally Queenie's story follows. She is a preacher in a clapping church. 'We see her urging the congregation on to salvation, warning them of 'the fire next time' (Steele 1982: 17). Queenie leads an insecure existence similar to that of Hopie and Pearlie. The women in the congregation accuse her of lechery with the bishop and she is removed from the congregation. Queenie fights for the support of her children but cannot face the battle any longer when she hears that her house will be razed to the ground for the sake of the construction of a new building. She asks her friend to take care of her little daughter Faith and leaves for the Alms House.

At first sight the play seems to be a litany of lost dreams and broken promises, of all

the miseries which befall women. The analyses are so keen because of the translation of the oppression and humiliations into a raw and bitter humour which depicts the female characters even more clearly. The theatrical metaphor they used to unite the scenes is another strength of the play. They used the sequence of the Etu-ritual. Originally Etu is an African way of celebrating the dead. In West Jamaica the ceremony is still executed by women. It is a festive occasion during which the woman leader invites the women to perform family songs and dances. This ritual refers to the Alms House fire as well as to the 167 that died in it.

As has been noticed in preceeding case-studies presented, performances are often more vital for players than for the audience. A performance rounds off a long process of learning, studying and creating for those who have undergone the process. If all is well this process is not visible to the audience in the final product. That is why the open structure of a workshop is often more exciting and useful for the actor as well as for the participants in the target group. Nevertheless, performances draw more public attention and a wider circle of interested parties than the workshops.

The build-up of a performance happens in phases. First, themes are brought forward by the various Sistren women, drawing upon their own experiences and which, at that moment, they find appealing as the future play's subject. Within their own cultural tradition, the women look for possible exercises to warm up while improvising on these themes. The exercises can be based on children's songs or games, but also on the question-answer game between soloist and chorus. Then the second phase follows consisting of testimonies which has long since been an important phenomenon of the Jamaican women's culture. Among working class women, the telling of personal events from the past is no uncommon usage. Girls hear such testimonies from their mothers and grandmothers. Confessions are also known from church services.

To come to these testimonies, photos, songs, keywords, newspapers or simple gestures are used. They need not always be personal stories. Sometimes they are about items Sistren members have gone through indirectly, but which have affected them nevertheless. The testimonies which thus arise around a particular theme or a distinct event are grouped in a first preliminary scenario. The confessions are formulated as problems. The problems are examined for differences and similarities of which the outcome serves as a basis for further research into the deeper causes of those problems. This procedure triggers off the phase of research. The players read into the matter, look for material referring to the problem and interview people who know more about it. Sometimes the assistance of a professional researcher is called in.

In the light of the results of this research, the scenario is rewritten. Then parts of scenes are rehearsed. The actresses write out the scenes. This is done very minutely, because their oral tradition has trained the memory. The recorded material is then mutually exchanged to serve as a basis for further improvisation. This is mainly done to transform the individual work to group's work and finally to a group's product.

In their work with women in rural communities Sistren opts for a somewhat different approach to help these women organize themselves (French 1985: 3-6). For the illiterate women they apply games and physical exercises such as the spelling of letters and words in poses. A great many of the exercises have been developed from Augusto Boal's method of problem solving skits. In these, the group develops to a climax a skit on a particular theme. They then stop and ask the rest of the group how the problem should be solved. After a discussion, the solution is enacted.

Another example of Sistren's strengh is their full acceptence of Creole as a language and means of expression in their workshops and also in their performances. When making the production of *Bellywoman Bangerang*, the women were asked to write down their improvisation in the form of a scenario. It appeared that the majority of women had had too little education to be able to satisfy this request. Therefore plans were made to start courses and

begin workshops after the *Bellywoman Bangerang* tour, and to organize them in such a way that the women would also be taught to read and write.

Nowadays, the fellow workers of Sistren write out complete scenes in Creole. This results in a strong sense of respect for themselves, for the women for whom they work and for the audience. Thus as a means of expression Creole, with its proverbs and idiomatic expressions, has obtained a place equal to English. People learn that the Creole dialect has grammatical rules just as the language it has been derived from. Moreover, the Sistren fellow workers do not hesitate to point out to the women with whom they work the grammatical similarities between Creole and Twi, the African language from which the Jamaican vernacular has derived its grammar.

10.5. Theatre for development: a hostile answer from the authorities

Kamiriithu is a kind of satellite town of Nairobi (Kenya), a commuter's town of about ten thousand inhabitants 35 kilometres from the capital. Kamiriithu has attracted a great many people from the rural hinterland, which has led to squatter areas round the town, containing mostly landless labourers, living on subsistence level, even if they had found a job in the largest local Bata shoe factory.

Because the illiterate subsistence farmers in this area, who did manage to make a living by agriculture, wished to distinguish themselves from their landless countrymen, the Kamiriithu Community Educational and Cultural Centre (KCECC) met with quite a lot of problems organizing literacy classes. That is why the KCECC requested the Adult Basic Education Division of the National Council of Churches of Kenya to initiate a project the target group of which would be the illiterates living in the squatter areas, according to Correia (1978: 8) in order to:

- "assist the Centre to open adult literacy classes;
- investigate the reasons why men do not attend literacy classes;
- develop relevant Kikuyu literacy materials;
- experiment with the psycho-social approach to adult literacy and development."

This aid had to come from the National Council of Churches, because Kenya's development policy at that time aimed primarily at promoting self-help projects among the rural and urban poor. These people were expected to organize themselves and initiate projects with private funds they had raised themselves. Only after witnessing this collective power were the Kenyan official government agencies willing to negotiate on additional funds.

The great problem of the population in the squatter areas, however, was their inability to get themselves organized. That is why the KCECC chose to use the literacy approach as developed by Paulo Freire. It was particularly Ngugi wa Mirii (1980: 55-61), an adult educator and researcher employed by the University of Nairobi, who, as the key organizer and supporter, introduced the teaching methodology in this project. Another member of the University staff, the novelist and playwright Ngugi wa Thiong'o[6], head of the University's literary department, sympathized with this initiative of the people of Kamiriithu to such an extent that he promised his collaboration in co-ordinating the cultural activities of the centre.

The first step was to call into being an organizational structure containing sub committees for every activity of the centre (fund raising, adult education courses, cultural activities, etc.), and a central committee to which the sub committees were to report. Ngugi wa Mirii was chosen as chairman of the educational committee, and Ngugi wa Thiong'o chairman of the cultural committee. As regards organization, it was agreed that both were allowed to make proposals, but that the final decisions on how to go about developing and discharging the activities were to remain the responsibility of a collective of members of the centre. Only

such a democratised organizational structure, it was hoped, could make it possible for the centre to grow into an accepted self-help organization, in the eyes of the Kenyan authorities as well as of possible donors.

The learning method in the literacy classes on the one hand encouraged the use of pictures referring to the socio-economic reality of the pupils, and on the other hand role-play exercises were used in order to act out the prevalent social problems the pupils had to deal with. Using visual learning materials and role plays were vital attempts to make the pupils in the literacy classes aware of the fact that it was not local alcoholism, prostitution, and the degradation of ethical values which caused the poverty, but that, on the contrary, it was poverty resulting from and made permanent by the socio-economic balance of power in the area.

> "(...) the Kamiriithu program encouraged people to question what was happening to them, to overcome the rationalisations and myths provided by society and to begin to understand why they were landless, poor, etc. In Freire's terms, they learned 'to read the world'" (Kidd 1982: 51).

Very soon the pupils of the literacy classes were able to put into words and support by arguments their preference for their own teachers. Discussions on and analyses of their own problems became the focus of their learning process to reading and writing. And after some time the students were able to write their own life stories and read them to their fellow students.

As regards cultural activities, the participants had become enthusiastic about the role-play exercises which were originally used as a learning method in the literacy classes, and they had the wish to write and perform a play themselves, based partly on their written life stories and on the analyses of the socio-economic situation in which they lived. The co-ordinators were asked to arrange the written raw material into a provisional plot outline and some dialogues, which were to be read out to the members of the centre.

> "Once the draft was produced, it was reviewed and amended by the literacy students and the KCECC Executive Committee. (...) In these sessions, which went on for two months, the script was read out, discussed and criticized. Where the analysis was felt to be inadequate, the community suggested changes. (...)The script-finalizing process was the means through which the villages re-appropriated their own culture" (Kidd 1982: 52).

In this way, a number of plays were produced in Kikuyu language, for instance *Ngaahika Ndeenda* (I will marry when I want), *Ndinguri na Murimi* (The rich man and the poor peasant) and *Mwiku Mwiku* (Where are you people?).

Ngaahika Ndeenda deals with the lives of the workers in Kamiriithu. A worker is employed by a rich farmer and a former collaborator with the colonial authorities. The worker is robbed of his last plot of land by his employer in a very sly manner, and this employer's son fathers a child on the worker's daughter without taking any responsibility for it. The daughter has to drop out of school because of her pregnancy. She finds a job at a coffee plantation, and falls in love with a worker of the Bata shoe factory. From that moment on she rejects all the advances made by other men with the words 'I will marry when I want'. At the end of the play her young lover is the leader of a strike at the shoe factory and his love is at the head of a revolt against the foreign owner of the coffee plantation.

According to Kidd the play became more powerful through the use of dance, songs and references to the history of Kamiriithu. In particular, the songs dating back to the liberation war, the songs of the Mau Mau, provoked deep emotional memories in the audience. Young

and old comprehended that these songs emphasized the central theme in the play, which was the fight against foreign influences and interests in Kenya.

In the eyes of the regional authorities, the educative and cultural activities of the KCECC began to politicize. As the performances in a theatre that they themselves had meanwhile built drew thousands of sympathizers and spectators, licences for the performances were initiallyrefused. The view of the masses, however, forced the authorities to give the licences after all. In December 1977, Ngugi wa Thiong'o was arrested. Nevertheless the activities in Kamiriithu continued to draw large crowds from the surrounding areas. After the death of Kenyatta, Ngugi was released and received in Kamiriithu with open arms. He continued his work with Ngugi wa Mirii.

The KCECC established some contacts in order to give performances in the National Theatre of Nairobi. The requests made to the authorities were never answered. When in 1982 rehearsals were to be held at the National Theatre, the doors were found to be closed. They did ten evening performances at the University campus with enormous success. But at the instigation of the government they were banned here too. When they wanted to continue their performances in Kamiriithu, they found their theatre razed to the ground. Finally both Ngugi's took refuge in Zimbabwe, where they were welcomed by the government with the request to start a policy for rural community theatre as a tool for adult literacy and awareness training.

10.6. Final remarks

Because of the writings of Paulo Freire, literacy campaigns became more of a small-scale affair all the time. This gradually changed the policy for the fight against illiteracy slowly but surely from a developmental sector policy into a developmental target group policy. This became clear, for example, from Augusto Boal's theatrical activities, which were part of the ALFIN project in Peru as described in Chapter V. For Boal collective work implied collectively working with the audience. In this way the focus shifted, as happened in Boal's career, from the performance (the product) to the working process (a means of education): the theatre maker became a drama teacher.

Boal's work made clear that working for, with and by the target groups caused the literacy campaigns to be politicized to a certain degree. Such a political tendency in tailor-made development workby, for and of the local community is felt as a threat by the authorities, who, taking countermeasures, may even go as far as to censor certain plays, stop or take over certain developmental activities, and even expel developmental workers or theatre makers who stand up for the local population too much in their view. This happened for example to the instigators of a literacy and adult education project in Kenya.

In development-oriented theatre, according to Mwansa (1984: 27), we do need animators who are able to teach the local communities to cast off their passivity and conformism. These animators can be theatre makers, community workers, or adult educators, as long as they know how to penetrate 'the culture of silence' and to convince the villagers that they have the power to change things. This is a difficult task because people, cherish the illusion that the animator is some sort of a Messiah, which afterwards leaves both the animator and the community deeply disappointed.

So, theatre and other cultural forms of expression were not only used by resistance organizations (Higgs 1975: 27-33), which work 'underground' to liberate people from the state ideology that is maintained from the top, but also by several types of organizations which at first sight would seem to co-operate with the ruling political apparatus. The Filipino case I presented, however, illustrated how fully committed staff members of a national and urban based NGO became interested in a more democratic diffusion of the performing arts. This objective demanded at least some reflection of socio-economic reality in rural areas,

and forced the initiators to deal with this reality within their theatrical work. They did not use traditional performing styles. Instead, local means of expression were used to introduce and develop theatre within the rural communities as an instrument for providing information, as well as for raising critical reflection.

In this chapter it was noticed that in Ecuador, Ghana, the Philippines, Jamaica and Kenya drama has proved an effective means for purposes of consientization. In the Philippines, Jamaica andKenya this principle involved the development of political awareness. The creative drama approach on the Philippines has given rural areas a form of drama which did more than merely reflect society. There, as well as in Kenya, theatre represented a microscope through which the local population examined and analyzed its own community. Moreover, this approach encouraged action from within the community. And finally, in addition to literacy classes, popular theatre was used in Kenya to promote social awareness and emancipation. Popular theatre functioned within the framework of 'popular education' in urban districts as an instrument that went beyond mere propagandist and subversive issues. It has become an instrument in the hands of the communities themselves.

What conclusions can be drawn from the case studies? In the Philippines, Jamaica and Kenya, popular theatre workers confronted the authorities with a new phenomenon that they did not know how to control; by opting for new forms, the theatre groups discovered gaps in the oppresssive system. The performers created points of reference for the audience by sticking to the form that the audience appreciated, thus making the message acceptable: it was expected that these critical actors had something more to offer than a straightforward play.

On the other hand, these new forms of popular theatre did not effect the kind of awareness-raising influence that its originators had hoped for. In the Philippines it has been shown very clearly that the performance in itself was not sufficient. Next to building up an information infrastructure, a firm organizational infrastructure still needed to be initiated. Further proof of this is given by our examples from Ghana, Jamaica and Kenya: the real work there began **after** the performance; only then was follow-up provided, only then were social workers present to make sure that the message was carefully considered. In Jamaica and Kenya even more was done. There, the performers did not act out a drama created by others: they were impelled to write their own plays and to portray their own lives onstage. They were thus able to bring their own performances very close to reality and to comply with the emotions and opinions of the audience, out of whose midst they came.

XI.
Target Groups: NGO's and the Marginalized Rural and Urban Poor

Popular theatre in Bengal has always denounced the difference between the governing elite and the dominated rural population. In 13th century Bengal, the mythological plays grafted upon the puranic epics such as the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, served to perpetuate the status quo and the Brahmin supremacy. The epics, which were extremely popular among the rural audience, legitimated the socio-religious feudal power relations. Theatre served to confirm the rulers and their dominance, but simultaneously, there was always popular theatre offering resistance.

In the 13th century, during the short-lived rule of the South Indian Vaishnava Sena kings, a true theatre of resistance arose among the population. Bhakti, a combination of singing and dancing, expressed an accusation against the discrimination and economic exploitation by the Brahmins (Singer 1972: 157-158). The songs condemned the hypocrisy and decadence resulting from the caste system and pleaded for a more equal scheme of things.

> "Samkaradeva (...) the fountainhead of the movement's central ideas, declared that he had translated the religious classics into the vulgar language of the people for the benefit of the womenfolk and the lower orders, the 'stree' and the 'Sudra'" (Gohain 1980: 136).

In the 14th century, during the mass conversions of the common people to Islam, Persian became the court language. In spite of oppression, *bhakti* developed further among the people. Even if the performances underwent Islamic influences, the acting itself continued to fight the new foreign tyrants and the Brahmin dominance.

Still nowadays when the caste Hindu landlord invites a theatre group on the occasions of village festivities and feasts, the harijans are seated ina separate section of the audience.

An example of this is a form of traditional street theatre *(therukoottu)* held at religious ceremonies in the course of which the landlords remind the poor that they were born to be exploited. The event is financed by the wealthy farmers. *Nandanar koottu* is the title of one of these *therukoottu*. It tells about the harijan bonded labourer who requests permission of his brahmin landlord to visit the Temple of Lord Nafaraja near the city of Chidambaram. His lord grants the request on the condition that Nandanar first cultivates 400 acres of land, all by himself. Nandanar begins this undertaking but soon realizes that this work is virtually infinite. He then flees to the temple, gets caught and is burnt by his lord. During the burning Lord Nafaraja appears and blesses Nandanar for his pious behaviour. Here we are confronted with three quite evident plain messages. First, harijans were born to be bonded labourers; second, harijans do not need to visit temples to worship the gods; and third, when they run away, it is legitimate to burn them.

This well-beloved form of street theatre, *therukoottu*, is usually engaged by the landlords at large religious feasts in the country. As a reaction to this, the Integrated Rural Development Society (Villupuram), together with a number of young students, constructed a play which

in its form resembled this street theatre but which had fully contemporary characters and which related modern anecdotes about the lives of the harijans. They maintained the theme of the confrontation between landless labourer and landlord, but it was linked up with historical instead of a half-mythical incident. In connection with the burning of 42 harijans in the village of Kilvennano by the landowners, who could not bear the fact that the harijans had asked for a pay rise, they presented a play explaining the reasons behind that request.

11.1. Activistic theatre for, by and of untouchables

Ghandi (cf. Dumont 1972: 270) was of the opinion that the harijans would be strong enough to organize themselves and to liberate themselves from their oppressed position. To enable them to carry this out, the Untouchability Act was ordained. But the Untouchable Movement could not count on the unqualified support of the officials, and certainly not on those of the Brahmin Movement, which was much stronger than the former.

In the dry Tamil Nadu strip in the most southern part of India, the harijan agricultural labourers remained unorganized and cut off from all facilities. Their wages were extremely low. Men received four rupees for eight hours of work, women two rupees for the same number of hours. In 1974, therefore, a number of young students set up an NGO under the name of Action for Cultural and Political Change (ACPC) which would later be changed into Rural Community Development Association (RCDA).

> "The objectives of RCDA turn on recognition of Harijans as an integral part of society where they are accepted as people with dignity and respect; the building up of harijan power through mass organization for effective, social and economic participation at all levels; the consolidation of Harijan labour economic issues based on day to day problems in order to increase their bargaining power, the politicisation and organization of landless agricultural labourers other than harijans and their conscientization for class struggle, and help to liberate the four categories of landless labourers, namely [1] landless labourers on daily wages, [2] agricultural landed labourers with small pieces of land but lacking material resources, [3] permanent bonded labourers in the clutches of big peasants and small farmers and [4] semi-bonded and contract labourers and share croppers" (Sugithiaraj 1979: 14).

With a view to the sharpening contrast between rich and poor in Tamil Nadu, the RCDA-workers wanted to dedicate themselves to the landless labourers in this area, among whom were the harijans. Here they took the line that the poverty in the slums of Madras had in fact sprung from that of the rural areas, which was where those slum dwellers had come from.

Their approach lies in community organization which they, in their educative activities, connect with the pedagogics of Paulo Freire. Thus RCDA's approach is action-oriented. During the first four years (1974-1977) they worked in the Chilfamour Area (Chinglepet District), where they experimented with organizing labour movements.

> "The harijan community in Madurantakam taluka of Chinglapet District has been an oppressed community for generations. Harijan villages were burnt and many harijans were beaten and victimized continuously in this area. There has been a disparity of opportunity for self development in education, employment, medical care, transportation and participation in decisionmaking either at the local community level" (Sugithiaraj 1979: 15).

In this district 79% is harijan, but virtually all the land is owned by caste Hindu landowners who, informally, still represent the feudal landed gentry. In 1978 RCDA's staff left Chittamoor,

after having accomplished a few successes with strikes, with written statements by landowners against further extortion, with the release of a number of families from bonded labour, and with successfully petitioned local authorities for many basic services.

Within RCDA, animators (community organizers) are organized in teams. They have opted for a collective approach in their work, which also involves the target group. They only begin their work after an explicit request by the local population which is confirmed by a rollcall vote of the entire community. 'They work with the people and not for the people' (Sugithiaraj 1979: 14). The work is usually started in a core community and aims at a multiplier effect around the neighbouring communities. In the 'key village' they first obtain a place, subsequently literacy and adult education classes are set up.

These are followed by leadership training and the training of action committees. Only then do the cultural action programmes and mass meetings come in, in order to prepare for the real fight and to consolidate the labour movement. At this stage, an organizing infrastructure has been established and RCDA's job in the area is finished.

Drama in various forms is of importance in the different phases of this awakening of consciousness. In the literacy programmes (which, apart from giving attention to political topics, also give attention to health care and women's organization) role play and short improvised skits are worked with. These serve not only to enlarge on the themes raised in the literacy classes. They also give the first impulse towards analysis. There is always an organized discussion afterwards about these improvisations. During the leadership training, in which future leaders receive instruction and information as to how government institutions and the local panchayat[1] function, roleplay is used rather as a simulation exercise and as an instrument for assertivity training. Here, the animator always plays the official, whereas the future leaders in this manner prepare themselves for future action which really will have to be taken.

In the cultural action programmes which are part of mass meetings, drama has another function. It informs the population about injustice and the action that has to be taken. It literally activates and propagates. An active dialogue between actors and audience is stimulated by talking to people in the audience about certain reactions to the situations in the play. Frequently, the acting is stopped as someone in the audience starts a dialogue with the actors.

But the use of drama by the cultural action programmes is also structured in a number of phases. According to Kidd (1980: 458-463), during the first three to four months only short skits are presented, dealing with the different problems ofthe village. In the second phase, the skits deal with clearly defined needs in the village (such as the need for electricity) and the action that should be taken, such as petitioning with a government officer. The message is clear: problems are solved when people organize themselves.

In the third phase, the drama is more and more dominated by the class struggle. The sketches and the role play aim at the confrontation between the villagers and the landlords. In this phase, the themes of the play are usually aimed at concerted action of more harijan villages to start off the actions at a village as well as at a government level. All these presentations, which are certainly not without humour, are followed by the conventional post performance discussion.

Finally, the reactions of the local landlords are worth mentioning. Of course the actions in the villages did not escape their attention. They kept a close watch on every step being taken. Often their reactions were violent. As could be expected, they hired thugs to beat up the leaders or to terrorize a harijan section of a village. But the landlords sometimes also came to watch the performances, which gave the harijans so much pleasure. When they noticed that these were performances not based on their own forms of drama nor their religiously oriented theatre, but that they themselves were clearly recognizable and the most important characters on stage, the landlords' reactions varied from orders to completely clear

the area and to disconnect the electricity, to leaving the playing area in a terrible rage (Ravi 1979: 19-21 and 29).

In the second half of the seventies about 6000 people from the 65 harijan villages where the RCDA had been active, came into contact with its programmes. About forty young animators were trained to carry out the programmes.

> "Some 300 acres of *bhoodan* land were released for the benefit of the landless after a prolonged struggle with the rich, who have been cultivating it, though it was donated to the landless years ago. (...) Systematic organizational techniques have been used to get house sites for seven Harijan villages. (...) A sewing school has been established to provide employment to 25 educated young women. Three wage strikes have been organized in which more than 25 villages participated to demand higher agricultural wages from landlords. Two of them were successful. A number of other oppressed castes joined the strike and showed their class solidarity. (...) Many girls have been given training in comprehensive rural health, child care, hygiene and family planning" (Sugithiaraj 1979: 16).

RCDA's approach deliberately translates the deeply rooted problem of the notion of untouchables into a class struggle and a class consciousness on the part of the 'rural proletariat'. Therefore RCDA's animators do not believe in relief work. They do not like making compromises on a local level, but prefer, through politicized action, to gain recognition on a national level. The petty farmers resist any form of harijan organization. Members of the lower castes find themselves sandwiched between the increasingly stronger position of the big farmers and the landless labourers, who are organizing themselves. For them the only solution is to crawl to those above and oppress those beneath.

11.2. Theatre for construction workers: the nomadic existence of Lok Doot

Lok Doot or, translated from Hindu, Messenger of the People, is part of a voluntary agency, Mobile Creches, which was started in 1969 'to provide basic day care for the children of migrant workers employed on the building sites of Delhi, Bombay and Pune, and living in cramped, unsanitary and isolated camps' (Burns 1984: 171). These construction workers and roadmen are generally poor peasants and landless labourers who have come to the towns to try their luck there. Most construction workers in Delhi are villagers from Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, and those in Bombay come from the arid hinterland of Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra. They offer their services at every building site.

They camp in rough shelters and lack the most elementary facilities. With their spare belongings they move from one place to the next, wherever the contractor starts building. Their children grow up in this nomadic existence. They do not get the chance to go to school. Neither civil servants nor politicians are alive to this group of people. Mobile Crèches went to visit these people and teams of animators joined their camps, originally to provide basic child care.

> "(...) as Mobile Crèches grew in both size and stature as a service agency its energies were concentrated on (...) revisions of the laws relating to the living conditions to provide basic services. (...) Their work underlines the importance of being aware of the social cost of building construction" (Burns 1984: 177).

Lok Doot was initiated, after a number of experiments in 1976, as a mobile educative theatre unit. According to Lok Doot's theatre manager Mina Swaminathan (1979: 8), Mobile Crèches experimented in various slum areas where the children spent the larger part of the day in the

streets, because their mothers worked as construction workers or were employed elsewhere. So originally the educative work of Mobile Crèches aimed at child care, in the course of which it engaged the mothers in discussions about health, child care and nutrition by way of adult education and literacy groups. Later, the fight for better living conditions for the whole family was added to those goals.

The several parts of the educative programmes are integrated and then processed. Literacy is tied to thematic discussion groups about child care and health. 'Sewing-cum-literacy classes are conducted for two hours in the afternoon, which are meant for the benefit of young girls who are either school going or school drop outs or have never been toschool' (Dighe 1980: 6-7). In addition, there are adult education programmes tied to mothers' and parents' meetings. The stage activities are aimed at the various age groups within these migrant colonies, but are always related to the experiences of the groups in question.

According to Burns (1984: 171), the group in its short history has undergone a number of changes in objectives. Its work in the past had been entertainment oriented; the group wanted to make theatre for people who could never go to conventional theatre. The plays were improvised medleys and reenactments of myths and legends which were cherished by their audience. The objective was to motivate their audience for the work of Mobile Crèches. In the subsequent phase, the group aimed more at didactic performances which explained the basic principles of child care and gave the parents a better insight in the daily activities carried out by Mobile Crèches concerning the children while their parents were working on the building sites.

In the third and most recent period, the group started working with different age groups, children, youngsters, and adults, making improvised problem plays in co-operation with their target group. The intention, the form and the content of the performances have changed in the course of the years. Its emphasis moved from theatre as a product to theatre as an (educative) means. Therefore more attention was paid to the process of making theatre as a means of analysis in order to ease the procedure of problem solving, than to the presentation of a shared social reality.

It is striking that the group's emphasis shifted to working with sub target groups among the construction workers specified according to age. With children up to twelve they still use folk stories and folk songs, of which the content is transposed to a modern setting. With the youngsters between 12 and 16 the emphasis is on a form of awareness raising which gives them a deeper understanding of their own fantasies - the dreams so common to second generation migrants. The main objective with the adults is the analysis of problems operative within the community. So it isclear that themes are tackled which have a definite relevance for these workers. By means of improvisations on a theme a play grows. The performances understandably vary in quality, but always incite to post-performance discussions.

In its work with the various age groups and in its performances, Lok Doot makes use of dance, music, songs, and mime and tries to present the essential dialogues in dialect as much as possible. A professional musician and a drummer are part of the group. Because of the absence of electricity, they work with a minimum of stage props, costumes and accessories. Houses that are being built often form a natural backdrop. They play in the round, so that the audience, the majority of which are children, sit on all sites. Performances generally are attended by 200 to 400 people. The performances are free but the audiences often react by spontaneously passing the hat.

The themes of the performances are many: debts, spending habits, alcoholism, superstition, child marriage, status of women, wife beating, dignity of manual labour, importance of unity, literacy, health and nutrition, etc. Thus the skit *Kanjoos Baap, Andha Beta* (Blind Son of a Miser Father) deals with the importance of eating green vegetables and the risk of blindness caused by a lack of vitamin-A. This play had been elaborated in rhythmic verse dialogue and was acted in mime. The message of the play, the necessity to eat green vegetables,

was again summarized in a song and a dance on the subject. Another skit *Andh Viswar* (Blind Faith) was an attack on the blind faith people sometimes had in superstition. The play did not criticize traditional healing as such but did criticize the magic interpretation of illnesses which stopped people from consulting a medical doctor. 'The skit had a good admixture of humour, lively characterization, folk music and farcical plot' (Dighe 1980: 11).

Thematic work with adults at first meant answering problems which had to do with the adults' opinions about suitable plots. From their rural background, they reasoned that the stories from the elaborate Indian epics such as the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* lent themselves best to this purpose, unlike their own everyday experiences and incidents. Lok Doot then started to work with the anecdotes, life experiences and testimonies of the adults.

> "So (...) various incidents were told and then enacted such things as looking for work, finding the way in a strange city, being without money in a new place, borrowing money, being hired and fired and so forth. Unpleasant incidents like pickpocketing, theft, losing pawned goods, being unable to read a letter were also taken up" (Swaminathan 1974: 8).

By giving these stories a particular twist which made the suffering hero somewhat less important, it became possible in the discussion to relate the protagonist to the working conditions of these construction workers.

11.3. Resettlement programmes in New Delhi: Jagran brings mime for slum dwellers

Tamasha, a popular theatre tradition in Maharashtra State, which was described in Chapter X, is characterized by an extrovert style of acting. It is not odd that Krishnan (1979: 5) compares this style of acting to the mimic style of the Jagran group, although I do not think that Aloke Roy, the leader of the group, would welcome this comparison. In 1966, Aloke Roy, an artist by training, was sent to Rajasthan by the Civil Service, a voluntary NGO, to carry out relief programmes in drought affected areas inhabited by untouchables. Part of the programme consisted in digging wells. From the moment the wells had been dug, the harijans were not allowed to use them.

As a consequence of these experiences, Roy decided to make sketches aimed at motivating the opulation to change their behaviour in certain development sectors. The shows were free of charge and the plots were simple. The scenes and sketches were overt, didactic pieces. The messages were straightforward, often with a chorused chant repeated by the audience, conducted by one of the actors. Although the shows were humorous and presented in a light-hearted manner they dealt with serious themes that involved the lives of the people:

> "food exposed to flies causes diseases; of the need to maintain clean community roads and bathrooms; the social evil of stealing; of wasting water; the possibility of obtaining bank loans; the evils of borrowing for marriages, etc. at exorbitant interest rates; of credit and other services provided by government; the benefits of a small family; the way out of bonded labour" (Fernandez 1976: 331).

By using mime Jagran, got round the difficulty of the many dialects. 'Crucial to the effectiveness of mime is the principle of assimilation which allows great scope for application of local words, symbols, gestures and, above all, local nuances such as rituals, connotations, taboos and customs' (Krishnan 1979: 5). Because it was physical theatre, the group was forced to clarify the meaning of their skits visually. The plots were concerned with the audience's daily experiences. For instance, their act *Shringar* dealt with the time a woman needs to apply her make-up, *Bus-sa-safar* about the risks which a large family runs when travelling by public transport (buses), and *Shower baths* gives a picture of the lack of running water in most of

the rural and slum communities and the health risks involved. The plays were designed for entertainment, but they were meant to clarify, moreover, that it was useless for the communities to keep on waiting for the authorities to solve their problems, that minor matters could be solved by the communities themselves.

Jagran means Awakening, and this travelling mime troupe has devoted itselve to large scale development work for the first time during the national family planning programme. Roy resorted tomime because he wanted to overcome two problems:

1) The problem of the several officially acknowledged languages and dialects in India and
2) the continuing discussion about whether or not to use traditional or popular performing arts for the sake of this sort of propaganda.

Roy felt that with the power of mime, its keen observation combined with the mitigating effect of humour and caricature, he could put social behaviour on stage. He identified the comical situations which large families encountered, as in the above mentioned skit Bus-sa-safar, translated these situations into characters and their precarious behaviour, and related a message to the *denouement* of the sketch.

Aloke Roy, Jagran's director, accompanies the actions with a running commentary in the local language. He works with stereotype characters such as the moneylender, the brahmin, the out caste, the grandmother. 'The action of each mime is reinforced by a narration in the local dialect, using a hand-held battery-powered microphone' (Kidd 1980: 437), during which the narrator through jokes constantly comments on the act.

The medium became so well known and so successful with the people that Roy and his group were soon contracted by all sorts of governmental and non governmental agencies to call attention not only to family planning but also to nutrition, government savings, loan schemes, etc. Their sketches were less concerned with solving the problems of the audience than with motivating them to self help, drawing their attention to the activities of several agencies, and sometimes directly transferring a number of development messages.

In this period of 1968-1974 the group received its assignments from both Indian and foreign donor agencies. In fact, during this period it functioned as a sort of small scale advertising bureau selling development activities.

> "Jagran promoted itself as a highly flexible, low-cost, freelance group that would go anywhere and make itself available to any development agency. In a publicity document it adverted its willingness to propagate any message the sponsors would like it to disseminate among the masses - the message and theme can be varied and changed whenever the sponsor wants it" (Kidd 1980: 432).

In 1972 CARE, an Indian NGO, contracted Jagran to take part in a multi-media mass communication campaign about health and nutrition in the rural areas of Adhra Pradesh and Utter Pradesh. In the same year Jagran made a TV programme about malnutrition, in collaboration with UNICEF, which had its first showing at the SITE-conference in Delhi (1972) (Krishnan 1979: 5). In 1973, OXFAM, a British NGO, approached Jagran for a series of skits for the benefit of health care activities of newly erected clinics in the slums of Delhi.

However, during the 1976 state of emergency, an event took place in Delhi which made Roy decide to aim at Delhi more permanently instead of continuing to travel. That year Sanjay Ghandi, son of Indira Ghandi, had bulldozers raise the inner-city slums in Old Delhi to the ground, thus making thousands of slum dwellers move to a resettlement area outside the city. All of this was in accordance with Sanjay's beautification plan to strip the city centre of its dilapidated residential districts (Baker 1979: 22). After about 700,000 people had, for the time being, been sheltered in camps 20 miles north of the city beyond Jamna river,

unreachable and far away from their jobs. The new houses built especially for them appeared to be one-room shelters on plots of land of 25 square yards each. A minimum number of facilities had been provided for, such as drinking water, public toilets, draining and a minimum number of streetlights. There was a great lack of schools, clinics and public transport for these first generation migrants, who were employed as construction workers, office cleaners or domestic servants.

The Delhi Development Agency (DDA) contracted Jagran to motivate the dwellers in these resettlement areas to make proper use of the facilities such as running water and toilets. 'They wanted Jagran to instil a sense of collective responsibility, to motivate a 'self help' approach to the upkeep of these basic services' (Kidd 1980: 433). Of course, Jagran started its sketches by poking fun at a man who wanted to take a shower during wintertime and who discovered that the water supply had again been destroyed. With the help of these bitter jokes in the water and sanitation sketches, alternated with the existing repertory about nutrition and family planning, the action hoped to help the people to help themselves. In plain terms, Jagran told them who was responsible for the proper use of the facilities.

In 1977 Roy met Paulo Freire and, according to Kidd (1980: 434), this meeting influenced Jagran's work quite substantially in the period to come. From that moment onwards he called Jagran 'theatre of the oppressed'. The sketches became politicized and because of that more satirical in dealing with the corruption on the part of social workers or the oppression of harijans. Since then Jagran has had a clearer vision on its own work. By no means did it intend to awaken mass movements or to mobilize the population. Roy thought its ambition to be much more modest. Jagran's intentions were much more inclined to stimulating a change of individual behaviour, than to mobilizing communities. Jagran's work was to make people aware of the obstacles in their own development, of the services offered by the government, of the responsibilities of a community itsel in its own development, and of their rights as citizins.

In the course of the years Jagran has developed an elaborate repertory which covers various development issues, from drunkenness to neglected children, from the dowry system to family planning and also in the fields of 'food, nutrition, hygiene, (...); maintenance of community pumps, water taps, public toilets, etc.; co-operation, civic consciousness, voting rights; ill-treatment of harijans and the duplicity of social workers/politicians' (Kidd 1980: 435). A short thematic action research is the basis to each new act. At the end of the performance there are no organized discussions. This is clearly beside Jagran's objectives.

There was an evident shift in Jagran's work marked by a move toward working with the residents of the colonies, rather than working for them. All the actors have a middle-class background. Once their training is finished, they are tempted to make more money elsewhere. Now and then Roy tried to train working-class children but they too often had different ambitions. Actresses are hard to find for this kind of work because of the traditionally dubious roles of actresses in Indian society and because of the rough-and-ready character of the performances. Roy, therefore, had to do a lot by himself. He was business manager as well as artistic director. Jagran clearly was not a theatre collective.

11.4. PROSHIKA: theatre for the mobilization of landless labourers in Bangladesh

PROSHIKA, a development organization in Bangladesh, has oriented its activities towards landless labourers and peasants since its inception in 1976. It tries to raise among the people an awareness of how their problems are related to a wider societal context, and to teach them that the only way in which they can better their positions is by organizing themselves. Organization will decrease their dependence on the dominant elite, on local as well as a national level. It is for this purpose that PROSHIKA has set up development centres in nine districts

of Bangladesh, with the intention of urging the landless labourers to organize themselves into groups.

According to Qazi Faruque Ahmed, the managing director of PROSHIKA, organization is the only way to make the labourers independent of the small dominating village elite of landowners. How do PROSHIKA animators organize their groups? The PROSHIKA animator looks for potential leaders among the labourers, the small farmers or the fishermen of the community and talks with them about setting up collectives. When PROSHIKA was first started there was a lot of pioneering work to be done to eliminate the self-evident sceptisism on the part of the landless labourers. But confidence has grown, and the results are evident. PROSHIKA's methodology in rural development has two components:

a) setting up an organization for the deprived rural population, consisting of groups of 15-20 households; and

b) a process of awareness raising through animators and local group leaders.

In order to realize these schemes, PROSHIKA provides service in the form of training, manpower, project consultancy and coordination. Training has two aspects: teaching practical skills and knowledge for the purpose of improving agriculture, fishery etc., and teaching what is called 'human development', i.e. a miscellany of social analysis, management and project planning. The object usually is to undertake joint economic activities that will diminish the population's dependence on local usurious moneylenders *(mahajan)*, to develop a common view on wages so as to fortify the workers' positions against land-owners, to persuade the authorities to allow the cultivation of government-owned land, and to expose instances of local injustice. The basic idea behind this is that the improvement of emancipation, legal security and pay levels does not necessitate a large-scale introduction of modern technology.

The approach proved to work. Gradually, the government and international aid organizations found out that the import of modern agricultural methods such as hybrid seeds, chemical fertilizers, insect exterminators and other capital-intensive technologies clashed with the interests of a majority of the population. At a village level, it only intensified the poverty because only few benefit from modernization. Therefore, PROSHIKA acknowledged the local agricultural knowledge andskills in this field and frequently organized meetings to have the labourers and small-plot farmers exchange experiences of their indigenous knowledge.

Apart from mutual actions against violence and extortion by informal local leaders *(mathar)*, the deduction of wages, the demand of too much leasehold off the harvest, the occupation of *khas*-land, corruption, etc., the major part of the group actions are aimed against the moneylenders. Why does a farmer borrow money? Usually because of unexpected expenses such as the purchase of medicine, a daughter's or son's marriage (the dowry) or a funeral, which has a deep socio-religious meaning for the people in the country. Money is borrowed from the *mahajan* or from a wealthy landowner, with land as mortgage. Apart from the periodical payment of interest, the farmer is obliged to repay the borrowed money in one lump sum. In the majority of cases this is impossible and sooner or later the land will fall into the hands of the moneylender. One of the first actions of a new group is the establishment of a savings bank. With the aid of a loan from PROSHIKA the moneylender is payed. The land is commonly cultivated for 3 to 4 years and the output flows back into the group's bank. After that the land is free again for cultivation by the individual small farmer. With the capital thus released the next debtor can be helped.

The collective cultivation of land appealed so much to the associations that they continued to practice it. They leased a plot per season, cultivated it, sold the harvest and thus saved money. It goes without saying that enthusiastic groups come up with their own plans and

wishes themselves. One of these wishes was drinking water for the villages. Sometimes the farmers had been obliged to fetch their water from a few miles away; even then the quality had been poor and had caused disease. In 1980 and 1981, together with UNICEF, PROSHIKA set up a campaign which provided a few hundred villagers with drinkable water. In the course of time, there have also been campaigns for the vaccination of cattle against epidemic diseases. Other campaigns were launched to start, reforestation, especially with the use of fruit trees from PROSHIKA's own nursery. Lastly, there was the campaign for an 'organic approach of agriculture' through which the growing of winter vegetables was stimulated.

Immediately after its establishment, PROSHIKA started to make use of drama. Besides using it as an instrument to raise the people's awareness in roleplay, group training sessions and workshops, it was soon used as an educative means in the villages. It proved more persuasive than any public speech, as it managed to create more active participation in the training sessions.

PROSHIKA animators were trained periodically in the use of drama. Initially, the training was concerned mainly with the use of role-playing, by animators as well as by local group leaders. The group leaders later used their acquired skills to make a theatre performance about their local situation of oppression, a performance that went beyond mere role-play. In 1976, a few Bengal development workers, together with labourers from the four villages surrounding Kotwali thana (the Comilla District), gave a performance about the way an usurious landowner eventually obtained possession of a small farmer's land through a loan. A month after this performance the labourers had founded a theatre group which travelled from village to village and which, through open-air performance, exposed local injustice, exploitation by landowners, moneylenders and village touts, depending on current local problems. Later this approach was tried by fellow workers of the development centres in other districts. It appealed to the population and groups sprang up like mushrooms. An incidental experiment proved to be successful and became a regular instrument in PROSHIKA's approach.

By 1980, PROSHIKA and the groups it had called into being had come to realize that the projects which had so far occupied them could not compete with the oppression practised by the well-organized landowners who mutually protected each other. It was futile for a single group to offer resistanceto the local power structure: it called for an organized body of groups. So the orientation of the work shifted from project to process: it was all but a land-labourers movement. But this required many more animators than were available: group leaders had to be trained in organization, for which purpose drama again proved an excellent instrument. Better than any public speech, it illustrated the need for solidarity. It bridged the gap of illiteracy, it could be created by the labourers themselves, and it touched upon an emotional string, which was powerful in overcoming the usual temerity about organizing oneself or standing up for one's own rights.

11.5. Aranyak: a bridge between town and country

Aranyak was called into existence by students in Dacca shortly after the independence of Bangladesh (1971). In the beginning this theatre group, already described in the introduction of this book, focused on the colonial history and domination of Bangladesh. They brought Kabor (The Graveyard) by Munir Chowdhury as their first production. Later the productions aimed more and more at the social inequality in Bangladesh and the class struggle. Themes such as bureaucracy, corruption, informal violent oppression were dealt with. The people who went to university then are now unemployed or have found jobs as teachers, civil servants or factory workers. The group's average age, however, is still under thirty. They are still hard-working amateurs, or rather part-timers. New recruits are usually students doing teachers' training courses or people who study Bengal. All their productions, which means one

yearly at least, bear witness to ideals that still exists, to an undying hope for a just society.

Since 1978 the Aranyak actors have regularly been on tour. Because the group does not have funds of its own, the actors and actresses are only available during weekends and vacations. They organize short workshops in the villages lasting 10 to 12 days in order to help the landless labourersproduce plays of their own, based on their experiences.

During the entire process, the Aranyak animator continually stimulates the groups to analyse the stories, the anecdotes, the relations between the protagonists and the key position they hold. He discloses links between individual events and the social context within which they take place. This is primarily done because the labourers know for themselves that they are being oppressed, but they fail to see or do not dare to define the cause of their oppression. The analysis also serves to prevent them from raising simplified and unrealistic solutions for the play. This clarifies the discrepancy between their world view and their actual daily experience.

One example is the dowry, which a family has to pay to the relatives of the young man the daughter is going to get married to. Once, when the animator asked them who, in fact, benefited from this system, the peasants discovered that marriage in this form was only a way of doing business, with women as merchandise and that eventually this tradition merely only contributed to the wealth of the moneyleader, the village usurer.

When the plot is finally agreed upon, the improvisations start. The animator has little to do here. Such technical or artistic failings as in the blocking of the characters, the projection of the voice, or acting techniques are more than counter balanced by the energy, the pleasure and the humour which come across with tremendous vigour. The labourers love to portray the land-owner as a caricature. The protagonists are reminiscent of *commedia dell'* arte figures. There are lords and servants. 'Pantalone' and 'Dottore' can be replaced by the 'moneylender' and the 'judge'; 'Arlequin' and 'Brighellat' by the 'labourer' and the 'fighter'.

The only things the animator needs to emphasize during this phase are discernment and selection so that, despite the improvisations during the performance, the actors keep to the essential line of the plot. Finally the performances follow, first in the home village, later in the other villages where Aranyak members are present. The workshop is concluded by an evaluation of two to three days in which the reactions from the spectators and their own experiences are discussed.

An Aranyak team generally consists of four animators, who are accommodated in four villages close together. They are accompanied by an experienced colleague. The 'workshops' do not have the convential implication of a formally organized learning process at some 'school' on the basis of daily presence. The most important goal of these workshops is to organize the labourers through their theatre activities.

In the course of the process, the landowners will learn that there is a stranger in the village who wants the villagers to make theatre. What usually happens is that the landowner invites the animator with all possible reasons and flatteries to come and stay with him. The Aranyak facilitator, however, prefers to sleep in the local school so that he will not be identified with the local elite. The school is neutral territory. The labourers do not fear to enter this building. After that he starts to visit the labourers in the fields during the day. He spends the first few days giving chapter and verse about his visit. As a rule, the peasants are quite suspicious of 'city slickers'. Therefore, the animator has to win their confidence and make clear to them that they can tell more about themselves on stage than any newspaper, radio- or TV programme, ever could.

As soon as the landowners understand that this is no whim, they will usually try to hamper the work. Their opposition grows as the work proceeds, and in doing so they do not shun violence (Kidd and Rashid 1984: 113-114). There was one performance about the bribes a local moneylender demanded before loans could be contracted. When this man found out that the villagers were making a play about him, he hired a few *goondas* (thugs) to threaten

the players. The performance was not called off in spite of it. The moneylender in question then put pressure on the headmaster to cancel the entire business. In the end there was a sudden electric power cut. The consequence, however, was that thespectators, coming from more distant quarters began to make inquiries after what was going on. Why was the performance cancelled? The actors then started to explain in detail about the corruption, the *mahajan*, the *goondas*, the headmaster. And at 8 o'clock in the evening the schoolyard was a regular beehive. For fear of the consequences, the headmaster had the lights switched on again so that the performance could begin after all.

According to artistic director Mamunur Rashid, the result of Aranyak's work can be found in a number of sectors: 'The most important thing is that such a workshop changes the awareness of the participants. Before, they saw poverty and inequality in the villages as their destiny, as part of Allah's will. One could not do much about that. During the working process, the labourers gained confidence in a united voice'. Therefore, since the late 1970s, Aranyak stimulates groups from one and the same area to work together regularly, to exchange experiences by organizing regional festivals and workshops and by cooperating more closely within the organization and with local development organizations. Animators of newly created groups are now frequently trained so that the continuation of the work is ensured.

11.6. Final remarks

By no means any traditional performing group will lend itself willingly to this type of information, however. India has had numerous examples of audience hostility towards such modernization messages when people have angrily turned their backs. As we have seen, indigenous performing arts with a highly ritual or historical context do not easily lend themselves to conveying a modern message. When cleared of ritual contamination and endowed with a flexible structure, popular drama forms can do so effectively, if tactfully employed. A better way is to convince the folk artists of the meaningfulness of the intended message and to give them free rein to present it as they seem fit. If folk artists are persuaded of the value of themessage, they will translate it into dramatic terms in a way that an outsider, however well-intentioned, cannot hope to accomplish.

Bengal *jatra* theatre is an example of how a traditional form may be influenced by conventional cultural values. In earlier ages jatra plays were based on semi-religious stories stemming from ancient Indian epics. The performance had an element of romance and of justification of power: a wandering prince would be in search of unattainable love, or a king would demonstrate the righteousness of his rule. At the start of the 20th century the narratives became more worldly but the themes remained the same: the prince or the king was replaced by another kind of authority, i.e. the bureaucrat. The romance was now between a wealthy civil servant or the son of a landowner and a girl of humble family whose parents were unable to provide the dowry required by the boy's family. In both cases, however, class distinctions were perpetuated.

Jatra performances have an 'air of wealth', and present-day demands of commercialization cause them to be enacted in urban playhouses by professional groups. The same groups are invited to the estates of rich landowners who wish to heighten the splendour of their celebrations and are willing to pay good money for it. Every once in a while the landed gentry will treat their workers to such a performance. This is a long-standing tradition. However popular this splendid form of theatre may be with the local population, its manner of production causes it to be immediately associated with the local elite. It is, as it were, influenced by the aura of the landlords. Of what good is such a regressive performing genre if the aim is to organize the workers with a view to attaining a more equitable division of land?

It is for this reason that, in Bangladesh, the non-governmental organization (NGO) Proshika used various theatrical forms that were not associated directly with local men of

influence. In the Comilla district, Proshika experimented with local puppeteers, and in other areas with time-honoured forms of declamatory art known as *puthi*. Proshika used forms of expression in which individual artistry was a focal point. Individual artists were selected for reasons of motivation and social involvement, a selection which became more complicated in the case of an entire professional company. In addition to musicians, reciters, puppeteers etc., Proshika engaged bards as animators and drama teachers. In their songs the popular bards of Bangladesh often improvised on the spot, they expressed approval or indignation with regard to local events. Their songs pointed the finger at social abuse, while the singer struck a merry or a melancholy note on his drum-guitar.

Besides multilateral aid campaigns, South Asia has many NGOs, each of which has its own objectives and target groups as regards developmental work. Some of the NGOs use drama as an educative medium, as drama has always had a strong tradition in this area. The performing arts still flourish, and appeal to the population emotionally. Apart from these NGO initiatives there are a number of initiatives made by young intellectual groups, sually students with a brahmin middle class background. According to Claiborne (1983: 51), Aloke Roy is a good example in this context, not only because of his brahmin and middle class background, but also because of his academic background as an art student.

The results of this approach are various. The most important one, though, is that it brings about a change in the awareness of the participants. Poverty and social inequality, formerly taken for granted in a society in which hardly anything could be changed, are now experienced as part of the world which they can manipulate by getting a collective say in things.

The limitations of this work are obvious. Two weeks is too short a time to mould a number of people into an organization. The experience functions as an eye opener but does not unite. As soon as the animator has left, there is the vacuum gratefully used by the landowners. If jobs are hard to get, what option do labourers really have? In a number of cases the landowner payed the theatre group to continue their work, but demanded other themes. The government, too, has used these groups to propagandise birth control or the building of toilets.

Regarding the oppositions between Indian groups of the population, as I described above, it is obvious that it is hard to achieve a convergence of interests among the different NGOs or theatre companies and theatre makers that have anything to do with developmental work.

Attempts to join forces and interests again were resumed in the 1970s, particularly by means of seminars and workshops. Networking, finally, was the first step to bring together NGOs as regards objectives, activities and training facilities.

XII.
Conclusions

The way in which the 'big' media in organizational format, content and control have supported North Atlantic socio-cultural domination has been critisized worldwide. The reassessment of genuine culture and of genuine ways of transferring knowledge, skills and information, together with the desire for an autonomous development of cultural identity, have caused some reserve about the import of 'big' media. It became evident that such import inevitably would bring about cultural import and a new kind of dependence. Halfway through the 1970s, the explicit call was heard in Third World countries for a New International Information Order (NIIO). Studies concerning this topic focused mainly on the one-way domination caused by the possession and production methods of media, as well as the permanent flow of information coming from the North Atlantic world by way of the media.

The influence of the 'big' media such as television and press were supposed to be an increasing threat to the cultural identity of large sections of the Third World population, partly because form and content of the programmes were imported from other more dominant cultures. This clarifies why NGOs in developing countries show a growing tendency to take refuge in the use of local 'small' media which have greater appeal to the population, thus inciting the people to have confidence in their own cultural identity.

Due to this trend, intergovernmental and multilateral organizations have, during the last two decades, taken for granted the notion that the performing arts are relatively inexpensive educative media which use the language of the people. Performing arts avoid the problem of illiteracy, are part of the local culture, and are forms of entertainment. Traditional performing arts have been used rashly in the framework of information campaigns about health care, hygiene, agriculture, family planning, political lobbying and such. Among the first to realize that the use of theatre in this way would not have any educative impact were the cultural and front-line workers, the animators in the field.

To these workers, not just any form of theatre could be effective in their work. Why not? Because some performing genres were embedded in a pattern of socio-cultural values, or were directly associated with previous national information campaigns.

12.1. Going popular with culture: the renaissance of traditional and folk performing arts

Through the ages, all cultures have made use of theatrical elements such as dance, music, song and narration, frequently in a ritual context. Some of those old theatre forms served to reaffirm the traditional status quo, others to criticize it.

Characteristics of traditional and folk performing genres are that the plays or (manu)-scripts are mostly anonymous, that the presentation (the style) and the plots are known to the local population, that it is not susceptible to essential alterations but that the structure of a performance offers scope for improvisation, and that it is embedded in the cultural tradition.

The two basic considerations in the selection of various traditional and folk performing arts to be used for motivational purposes are: (a) the range of theatre forms available in the

region, and (b) the biases which prevent the success of development programmes. Finally, the impact of the use of these media will depend on the direct follow-up and feed-back of the performance in face-to-face communication between the facilitator and the audience.

During international conferences, workshops and seminars, much lip service has been paid to the efficiency of traditional media. But, how did it work out in practice? The advantages which folk or traditional media have in driving home development messages are, according to the supporters of the use of these media:

(1) the fact that they are part of the life-style and the culture of the people;
(2) the fact that they have enormous variety, and that their low cost makes them suitable for experiments as well as regular use;
(3) the fact that the variety is distributed according to the different target groups based on age and sex;
(4) the fact that the face-to-face contact between performer and audience offers an instant feedback possibility and hence, as regards effectiveness, efficiency and adequacy, a higher potential of persuasive communication; and finally
(5) that these media have always been suitable for a specific thematic approach.

It was added, in support, that these media have a high extent of credibility for the participants of the culture in question; that these media, unlike the mass media are not associated with a modern and technocratic elite; that they use the language and symbols of the population itself, which can only make the message easier to be understood; that these media reach those groups of the population which cannot be reached by the mass media, such as the rural population and illiterates; that these traditional and folk media have always demanded active participation on the part of the audience in the communication process.

Thus, folk entertainment has aroused the interest of development workers for several reasons. Firstly, it is a time-honoured medium of instruction and of spreading news and novelties. As such it is accepted by the population. This cannot be said of other means such as slides- and filmprojection, radio, etc. Secondly, these kinds of theatre have always had a flexibility which allows the actors to convey their message through improvisation without doing injustice to the medium. Thirdly, folk theatre performers, because of their talents and skills, have a status within the community which causes their modernizing 'message' to be readily accepted on a local scale, far more easily than the same message coming from someone outside the community or from the upper echelons. Fourthly, the use of folk theatre for development or information purposes supports its survival and thus, indirectly, that of the local population's cultural identity.

In many Third World countries, traditional and folk theatre are truly living culture-bearers with a vital contribution to make to national awareness and identity. But the use of traditional and folk media involves more complications than had initially been expected. Here, too, there is a clear link between medium and message: it is not true that any medium can convey any message. Thus, an indigenous or traditional medium which has not yet lost its ritual values will be of a more closed and conservative nature than the recently developed and secular popular media. But what makes traditional and folk media preferable to the modern means of information is that they use the language and symbols of the people, that they invite an audience to participate and open the way for immediate feedback, and, finally, that they are inexpensive.

Since folk theatre reflects the traditional values, moral standards, and habits of the local population, one may wonder how it could motivate these people to change and modernize. The rural population is not insensitive to changes introduced from outside but will attempt to fit them into their own environment, their own world-view. As I have argued earlier, folk theatre is not insusceptible to change either. Through the ages it has adapted itself again and

again under the influence of local traditional political pressure, and it still continues to do so.

Some performing genres are bound to be more suitable than others, being more flexible, more open to a change of theme or mode of performance. Theatre with a ritualistic touch and performing genres that form part of religious, church, or liturgical festivities, for instance, are less suited to development messages as regards theme, than those theatre forms related to mark festivities of a more secular and popular nature. Performances of the latter genre may, but need notbe about the prevailing religion. Worldly themes, which are related to the belief system could be presented in these genres, such as traditional views on family life, food and eating habits, health care, and so on.

Using these folk and traditional performing genres in mass campaigns directly confronts us with a kind of inherent contradiction in campaigns. On the one hand the messages are centralized, and are brought to the attention of the public on a national level. The idea of the campaign-approach is that these messages on a national level are to encourage the development, social change or modernization of the country. On the other hand, and herein lies the contradiction, agricultural development or family-planning are never realized nationally, but always locally. In this way, centralized information dictated from above often fails to produce any effect on the level on which the action was meant to take place. And on this local level, not just any traditional or folk medium is suitable to bring across modern messages.

For this reason the performer or communicator needs an instant feedback mechanism, which is characteristic of the face-to-face nature of traditional and folk performing genres. This mechanism enables the communicator to switch the message according to the 'mood' of the audience and, gauging the effectiveness of the new message, to continue or disband the message. This sensitivity on the part of the performer, and capability to change subjects rapidly, is part and parcel of the solo-performer: the bard, the ballad singer, the chronicler, the puppeteer, the crooner, the master of ceremonies, the joker, the entertainer, the presenter, etc. Switching subjects according to a change of 'mood' among the audience, is harder as soon as a company of performers is involved in the performance. This is why, in the eyes of development agencies, solo performers are more acceptable to disseminate development messages, than traditional or folk theatre troupes or companies.

12.2. Popular theatre and urbanization: changing views on society

Popular theatre is generally associated with the resistance against the aristocratic, sophisticated, exclusive, elite minority theatre, or with the resistance against bourgeois theatre, or against all 'classic' theatre that represents the standard, the rule, and the existing order. Or we associate popular theatre with whatever lives most among the common people, that which is popularized and enjoys popularity, or that which springs from among the people or appeals to the people, without intellectual or aesthetic intervention from outside. We also associate with popular theatre that which links on to the oral tradition, to a rustic atmosphere, to the anonymous collective, or to what some call folklore, and others call primitive. Sometimes we associate with popular theatre that kind of theatre which aims at, or springs from the lowest social classes in society: proletarian, plebeian theatre, or theatre for the masses. Some use pejorative terms, such as the ordinary, common and farcical nature of this kind of theatre, whereas others speak of the spontaneous, frank, comically ingenious, bubbling and provocative *élan* of this kind of theatre. Finally, we associate popular theatre, in a chauvinist way, with whatever is generally appreciated, like famous national theatre groups, which are supposed to represent the nation at home and abroad.

Implicitly, such associations provide us with indications on the basis of which we can formulate a wide range of working definitions of 'popular theatre'. However, for the sake of the argument, we have to distinguish between popular theatre as a historical, period-related notion and popular theatre as a universally applicable notion. From a historical perspective

those forms of theatre called popular theatre have endogenously developed, parallel to the rise of urban areas, the industrial mode of production and the bourgeoisie.

From the 1850s onward, under the rule of colonial administration, increased urbanization produced amixed culture in the larger rural towns as well as in the big cities. Whether we talk about the court capitals, commercial towns or colonial towns of the past, or of the fast-growing metropoles of today in developing countries, the fact remains that throughout the centuries the city has always attracted people from the rural areas. The constant influx of migrants caused the socio-cultural influences between city and rural areas to go up and down, because these (new) urban people very clearly found themselves placed between the life-style and culture of the rural areas and the urban life-style; and also because they play, through their remaining rural contacts, the role of 'brokers' of culture.

At first sight these new forms of urban culture seemed to form an incoherent hotch-potch of the externally imposed official culture and the cultural elements of the local people's own history and practice. The theatrical form resulting was called 'popular theatre'. New cultural forms were introduced from outside the original cultural context, like the liturgical plays by missionaries in Brazil, like television drama in Iran, or like 'Theatre for Development' in Africa. These are examples of so-called exogenous cultural developments.

Popular theatre had a commenting role on life in the towns, on social changes (for example women's liberation) and the decline of traditional values and rules, or on the 'hopeless backwardness' of the family that still lived in the rural areas. The social comments given by popular theatre were not necessarily always of a progressive strain. They did not always advocate reform, resistance or revolution. They regularly had a conservative and regressive character or advocated the preservation of a separate cultural identity. And, as an established socio-cultural life-style developed for these originally marginal groups of the population, the function of popular theatre existing in a lively comment on society deteriorated and became, as it has in Japan, part of the traditional, or rather 'classic' repertoire.

However, the more local and ethnic the theatre form became, the less accessible it was for other parts of the country or even for other nations. A play in which Yoruba practices have been interwoven could easily remain uncomprehended or unappreciated in other parts of Nigeria where completely different views concerning cultural conventions were prevailing. The composers and producers of the Yoruba opera, an endogenous form of popular theatre, have clearly understood this. They have given performances in the Yoruba language, in Yoruba country. Music and dance were professionally stage-managed and the musical references, the myths and legends which were referred to, have been changed in such a way that the Yoruba knew what was meant by these minor changes. This rendered the performance attractive to the Yoruba, but not yet to the Nigerians in general or to the Northern Nigerian Hausa in particular, who see drums, dances and masquerades as irreligious excesses.

12.3. Popular theatre and cultural resistance

Popular theatre has always reflected social relations since the emergence of feudal society. At times this reflection has been symbolic, implying that matters of everyday life were not discussed on stage in explicit terms, but that the theatre made use of metaphors that represented a particular view of life and of socio-religious ideas, and which had their analogies in everyday life. The performance had a referential value, but one that was extremely veiled. At other times, topicality was reflected quite openly when the performance showed a situation that was immediately recognizable as being closely related to everyday life. One is tempted to assume that the use of metaphors is more traditional than the latter form, but this is untrue. The two forms have always existed side-by-side. Admittedly, the second form is more prominent wherever resistance to social conditions is strong.

Where in former times colonial rule had firmly been established and the North Atlantic

peoples settled overseas as a supra-elite, they took theirown cultural and theatrical traditions with them. The theatre of the rural people and, in some parts of the world, even the court theatre, were considered by the majority of white administrators to be exotic but inferior. This cultural oppression by outside forces caused some indigenous theatre forms to evolve into political media, as the mouthpiece of the local people. Whenever the colonial authorities felt their authority to be endangered, however, they imposed censorship.

The picture becomes clearer only with the start of the 20th century, when nationalist risings against colonial rule caused a revival of popular theatre. The imperialists owned the 'big' media, such as the press and later on radio; the 'small' media, i.e. all kind of performing arts, belonged to the nationalists.

In post-war colonies, most of which were familiar with resistance movements, the majority of theatrical forms concentrated on a single theme: the struggle for independence. Once that objective had been achieved, nationalist feelings ebbed. Some people returned to making traditional theatre; others allowed themselves to be used for propaganda purposes - a mouthpiece of the young state; yet others strove to achieve a national repertory theatre. Very few carried on convincing the population that social inequality still existed in spite of the so proudly acquired national independence.

Even after independence had been gained, the unequal balance of power usually implied that exploitation and oppression continued. As a result, popular theatre also continued to express indignation and protest, especially with regard to persistent poverty, and some forms of expression were fiercer than others in their criticism.

As oppression increased reactions tended to one extreme or the other: to be silent, or to make a clear statement. Those in power have always realized this, of course. As a result, there have often been two forms of a single theatrical tradition: one for the elite, the other for the common people. Even then, the elite cunningly managed to absorb the popular version within its own system and thus to silence or to control it under the threat of censorship. The effects were the same: either the theatre went underground or new forms came into being. Resistance did not die, and the theatre continued to voice genuinely popular indignation.

All this implies that popular theatre has never ceased to be a means to increase awareness, and that popular resistance has stimulated new forms of theatre. It also implies that the only historical context in which the theatre can be considered is one of conjecture and not a structural one. Dependent on the times and on the degree of oppression, popular theatre can assume its role as a mouthpiece of resistance. It may have a long history as the *wayang* theatre of Java, or it may take on a brand-new form such as the instant theatre of the Philippines, during the Marcos regime.

12.4. Popular theatre growing into 'theatre for development'

While on the one hand popular theatre was politicized, on the other hand the notion of popular theatre remained unsettled by the changing views in society on development strategies. When post-World War II development workers discovered that 'popular' media, including the theatre, could be used as instruments for development, they extended the meaning of the term 'popular theatre', to any form that appealed to the rural and marginal urban populations. The term 'people's theatre' which had gained fame in the North Atlantic world on the same grounds, was now introduced into the Third World to denote socially committed theatre.

At a conference held in Berlin in 1980, a group of Third World theatre experts, who desired to put a stop to the confusion and devaluation of terms, decided that from then on the term 'popular theatre' should be used in the sense of theatre that incorporated and preserved elements that are truly 'of the people', i.e. theatre that reinforces ethnic and class

consciousness. This type oftheatre makes the people articulate; it makes use of their own cultural resources and forms a bridge to those who are unable to take part in the customary adult education and development work. It is the kind of theatre that refuses to function as a mouthpiece of the dominant classes, and which rises against oppression and domestication. Because theatre is neutral as a technique, it can serve purposes of oppression as well as of liberation. As soon as it is used to transmit direct information, knowledge or skills (e.g. within a social and educative context), neutrality is out of the question. Whether intended or not, it becomes an instrument with which people are persuaded to accept their situation, or to involve them in changing that situation. In most developing countries, the initiative to make use of popular theatre as a 'small' medium has been frequently taken by NGOs such as Proshika in Bangladesh. As a rule the NGO first tries to organize the target group, e.g. landless labourers in Bangladesh, 'untouchables' in India or ethnic minority groups such as Tamils in Sri Lanka. The NGO uses theatre as an instrument with which to analyze the problems of the target group, or as a rehearsal for potential action. If this leads to an actual stage production, the original role-play on which it is based can often be detected: usually it has an exemplary function for the target group.

The use of popular theatre to comply with the emotions and opinions of the audience, was first experimented with in Africa in the early seventies under the name 'Theatre for Development'. Initially two initiatives were independently taken by the Universities of Zambia and Botswana to bring theatre to the people. It is difficult to define 'Theatre for Development'. The government has one view, the theatre maker another and, finally, the decisive appreciation of the performances rests with the audience.

Therefore, the emotional impact of a play, which is based on an existing social relevance, is felt to be more important than the artistic criteria. A problem which presented itself again and again during the experiments in the fields of ruraldevelopment and adult education was finding the balance between the social and the artistic criteria that must hold for this kind of theatre.

A striking characteristic of 'Theatre for Development' is the continuous struggle of the groups to achieve the greatest possible effect on the audience. It is true that this is strived after by every group, but the point is never so much underlined as in Theatre for Development. The explanation for this is that actors mostly choose an audience of which the social and cultural environment differ from their own. The most important consequence is that they try to make a thorough study of the social and cultural environment of the chosen audiences immediately at the start of the production process. Such action research has two aspects: to define and to get information about the interests, experiences and (possible) reactions of the target group

a) with reference to jobs, schools, leisure time activities, the living situation, family life, expectations of the future etc.
b) with reference to drama-images, forms of performing, dramatic affinity, theatrical abstraction, symbols and metaphors, forms of music, etc.

Of similar significance is the fact that the plays, which are constructed by the groups themselves, deal with the problems of their target group audiences. In spite of all differences most Theatre for Development initiating groups have several characteristics in common:

a) they seek their target group audience in their everyday environment
b) they are working for and with an audience, for whom in former days theatre had never been made
c) their performances deal with the immediate social problems existing among their audience (problems concerning rents, class justice, youth culture, suppression of women, etc.)
d) they want to contribute to the struggle to change society; as mentioned before, some

groups are in favour of the process of an individual awakening of socio-political consciousness and human relations, while others have a complete societal revolution in mind

e) they make their own plays and productions, to meet the needs and the problems of their audience as much as possible
f) the working method is collective and anti-hierarchic; in general the groups eventually avoid a strict hierarchical structure
g) the performance is never an isolated phenomenon; the groups prefer performances to take place within a total educative process of discussions or political campaigns.

As the seventies went on, one could observe that opinions on the process of collective work within development-oriented theatre were changing gradually. Where collective work initially referred to democratization of the organization and a collective production, it later also applied to the relationship between actors and audience. The teaching of drama became more important than finalizing a performance.

All the examples and case-studies presented have shown how vulnerable Theatre for Development may be. Several constraints are to be distinguished; some of a socio-cultural nature, others of an artistic nature. First of all there are the authoritative bottlenecks, either of a religious or of a political nature. For local authorities, the display of problems is one thing, action is another. That is why the performances are always critically observed by local religious and secular leaders. In any community where social and cultural activities are in the hands of religious organizations these problems will arise.

Next to constraints because of religious authorities there are those of a more political matter. Often, it does not only take time to convince the audience that the performers and animators were not hired as political fawners, but there is always the chance that by lack of strong political parties or unions who support this kind of theatre, the actors and community members receive little protection from potential reprisal. Therefore, spectators are often afraid to comment on the contents of the play publicly in the presence of local leaders.

When local authorities and notables do attend the performances they often disappear after watching one or two scenes. This close observation often results in self-censorship on the part of the performers. As soon as they appear to provide the audience with practical suggestions or advice, they can easily be accused of spreading sedition and politically subversive actions.

Besides these socio-cultural authoritative problems, there are a number of cultural habits and customs that can obstruct the free-flow of action during the working process: training, rehearsals and performances. At times, traditional customs handicap the actors in performing, e.g. the acceptance of food. Traditionally this is often done with the right hand, which this is 'pure' whereas the other one, the left, is 'impure'. Whenever the scene demands an actor offering something to another, this is also done with the right hand. This actually leads to actors upstaging themselves.

One of the most important discussions in 'theatre for development' is on how to make use of the indigenous folk traditions while avoiding the trap of conventionalism, of confirming the existing order, of resignation. If the performers go their own way, will they not drift away from the people? Using actors from among the people, acting their own story, might be the compass point by which the correct course can be set. But it must be emphasized once again that the performance on its own can merely raise awareness. The next step has to form part of the social action away from the stage

12.5. Bottlenecks and constraints within the artistic process of Theatre for Development

Artistic constraints in 'theatre for development' are various. In most of the improvised plays we see a naive moralising setting in the play. Plays about health care usually balance traditional

health care and indigenous healers against modern medicine, an opposition between the 'goodies' and the 'baddies'. In many of these skits, the good and the bad are opposed almost like black and white. Nuances in characterization are essential for all of these productions. It is simple to put a lable on a character, but explaining the character's behaviour in terms of his social background requires finesse.

This is where script-writing comes in. In observing the playlets time and again it becomes clear how important it is for the participants to have a good script, not only in order to make decent drama but also to get across the awareness raising message. If the social problem that has been identified is to be translated into a realistic story with a series of dramatic situations that reflect social conflicts in detail, a well-defined script is of the utmost importance.

Translating an abstract social problem into a concrete play or into a performance first involves collecting and arranging concrete and obvious problems, then translating them through analysis into an abstract social problem which must be given concrete stage form. This implies more than merely using stage techniques such as finding a conflict, inventing characters and dialogues. It is also the way in which the problem is identified, how it is translated into a concrete story, which has to be turned into a series of dramatic situations, which in their turn articulate the social contradictions in a subtle way.

But this way of making theatre has its limitations, too. Time pressure remains, not so much to finish the process as to finish the product: a performance. Because of this the content and depth of the play may suffer, which will not do justice to the complexity of the socio-cultural problems concerned.

After the basic data are collected, role-play particularly is used to arrive at a further analysis of data. The results are discussed and studied in depth, dramatically as well as socially. This part of the learning process enables the participants to analyse in a critical way what constituted their problems. All this provides enough material to devise definite improvisation exercises. In this way, the working process of arriving at a performance is, in fact, governed by a continuous dialectic between the analysis of society and play-acting, so that social contradictions are completely elaborated during workshop rehearsals and people have a clearer view on the social reality. This gives the necessary depth to the final performance. These joint efforts to keep changing the play because of its analysis, gives the community more insight into the social constraints and bottlenecks than watching a product performed by outsiders.

For the participants taking part in training seminars and workshops on 'theatre for development', as was described in the preceding chapters, the performances are certainly not a final product. The seminar is meant to be a phase they reach in their personal development as a trainer. However, to the people in the local communities, the performances are a single experience; that is why the villagers have a right to watch a 'final' product, a performance, which is entertaining as well as educative. Because one of the objectives of the performance is to motivate the community members, by means of theatre, to start a continuing dialogue with their own situation, the performances deal explicitly with the local social problems. Therefore, during the rehearsals and the performances, a number of realistic alternatives for action are shown to the audience. In order to raise the critical consciousness of the local inhabitants, some of the rehearsals are held in public.

It is clear that in this case theatre is used as an instrument for exploring and portraying current social processes. This instrument should in fact be in the hands of those who are victimised by these processes. In this type of popular theatre a script is never 'finished'. Along the lines of Boals's thinking the rehearsal is often more interesting than the performance itself because of audience reactions, which are then incorporated into the play. All of this requires its own aesthetic standards of theatrical production and direction. Action is shared among the actors and the audience, and the process raises the consciousness of both.

More often than not, 'social-action theatre' or 'catalyst theatre', on stage still promises far more than the animator or catalyst can live up to after the performance. Expressing a

truth known to everybody in the community becomes no more than washing one's dirty linen in public, if the catalyst is not able to help audience and actors on the right track to find a problem-solving action plan. If the performances cannot put forward suggestions for courses of action, the community might take the performance rather as a tool of problem-raising instead of problem-solving, and they are bound to feel left in the lurch. The audience may be excited to see their own problems portrayed, but such success at the same time constitutes the performance's weakness. In short, providing an action-oriented follow-up is quite often somewhat lacking in these kinds of theatre experiments.

Another problem concerns the development of skills in one of the most difficult theatre techniques: improvisation. On the one hand, there are the limitations of too narrow a theme as we can often see in for example drama on health care, when the aim is no more than the construction of latrines. On the other hand, there is the danger of exaggeration for the sake of pedagogical clarity. This is evident in the use of stereotypes, or in too obvious a moral. Naive and simplistic plays are often didactically ineffectual. After all, people change their own history in a manner subtler than unleasing immediate action.

Therefore, if improvisation is to be used effectively, there must be a number of skills in which the actors are to be trained locally. These skills are not so much in song, music, dance or drama, as in a suitable theatrical form which can combine the material that has been improvised collectively. Minor questions in such a training scheme are concerned with structuring a story, dialogue and plot; how to remove a deadlock in performances, and how to avoid excessive verbal expression? One of the basic techniques in which actors have to be trained locally is scenario-writing, producing an outline of the play which clearly states the analysed social problem as well as the plot, and which makes sure that the relationships between the characters amongst themselves and the over-all dramatic structure are logical.

12.6. From national sector policy to local target-group policy

Where one development project determines its activities from above and from outside, showing minimal respect for the socio-cultural context of its target group and allowing little participation of the people it worked for, another project determines its activities from below and from inside, stimulating a high degree of participation and allowing the population itself to choose courses of action.

It was particularly the change in interest, from large-scale projects to small scale projects, that drew attention to the resistance against change stemming from the local cultural perspective, and which underlined the importance of research into local knowledge and skills in order to get more 'tailor made' aid projects adapted to the local cultural context.

A radical change resulting from this ambiguity in developing strategies has been discussed in chapter two, where we pointed out the renaissance in the 1970s of indigenous knowledge systems and the revival of the use of local arts, crafts and skills.

Hence it was argued, that if one teaches people to read and write, one might do this on the basis of fundamental knowledge about subjects which are of direct interest to the people involved or which could be of practical use in their immediate livingenvironment. In the 1960s and 1970s one of the attempts to attain basic education was by means of literacy programmes. Many literacy classes for adults came into being which, through literacy and numeracy, taught women about childcare and child feeding, and men about agriculture, the stockmarket, or sanitation. This approach was called 'functional literacy'.

In spite of the fact that this intersectoral co-operation had been used in the fifties and sixties and thus was not really new to the development projects of the seventies, a growing intersectoral co-operation on all organizational levels was now explicitly aimed at.

These new ideas concerning integrated rural development obviously also caused a change in the views on how to deal with the people one meant to reach; how to communicate with

them. During the fifties and sixties, communication within large-scale campaigns had always been based on the classic top-down planning model which copied propaganda and advertising techniques from the world of trade and industry in order to motivate and stimulate the clientele to make innovations, whereas during the late sixties and early seventies the social interaction model of face-to-face communication gained ever more ground, in which the extension officer and his receivers held the key-positions. Finally, during the mid-seventies, the problem-solving method came into prominence, in which the user defines his own problems and suggests solutions. The aim of the last approach is that the outside planner plays a non-directive role. Although these three different forms of approach are presented here in a historical frame-work, none of them can be thought of as separate from current development projects.

As regards control, the suspicious attitude of national governments towards local projects was understandable. After all, the concern of these small-scale, local projects, directed towards specific target groups, was the mobilization and organization of the target group. This becomes quite clear looking at the sector of 'literacy'. Literacy training, combined with adult education and community organization began to politicize more and more on a local level. National governments blamed development work. Many a development worker or theatre maker has had to leave his project and target-group population at some stage, at the instigation of the government in question.

The parallel use of national mass-campaigns, face-to-face communication at community level and the problem-solving method during the eighties resulted in two specific problems, which led to renewed reflections on 'Theatre for Development'. Firstly, particularly in large-scale projects -the aims of which were to motivate the population for family-planning, food and nutrition, primary health care or literacy and adult education- the use of authentic traditional and folk performing genres was increasingly reconsidered. Secondly, it was realized that development work and communication on a local level were frequently diametrically opposed to the national campaigns as regards their approach. Whereas in the national campaigns theatre was made for the population, in development projects with a target-group policy there was a preference for theatre made with or by the local population.

Much of what has been achieved by theatre is often overlooked. Through theatre, changes in attitude are more easily brought about than through a demonstration, an extension-programme or the radio. This is because people get involved, which motivates them. And what is a development project without motivation of the people who are supposed to benefit? New theatre forms were developed in growing numbers; they were identifiable for the audience but as regards story, characters or composition they were stripped of any traditional or cultural connotation.

So when national campaigns were developing new theatre forms for the population, the local and, frequently NGO-supported projects turned to new theatre forms to be generated by the local populations or by performing artists who enjoyed a long-standing popularity among the population. Artistically, both initiatives need not stand in each other's way. But as the creation of newpopular theatre forms alone was not so much the concern as popular theatre forms in aid of local development projects, the ideas behind either approach tended to clash with each other. This was because, while large-scale campaigns tended to choose a sector policy as a starting-point in order to motivate the national population for more responsible parenthood, a healthier diet, or improved mother-and-child care, the local projects tended to choose a target-group policy, in which face-to-face communication and participation in a problem-solving approach played a major part.

In their attempts to help the developing countries, government and multilateral aid organizations tried to mobilize the 'small' media and to incorporate them into the ruling system. In the 1970s and early 1980sTheatre for Development tried to put a stop to this: the objective was to play, not for those development sectors determined by the authorities, but

for target groups determined by the theatre's own perspective: 'theatre for, by and of the people'. The audience no longer watched what outsiders considered to be suitable for them. In the new situation part of the audience would make a play with and for their fellows, on topics that both actors and audience approved. In such a case the performance is not a finished product but a tool to be used in a process. It also creates the need for organizational back-up, not in the sense of director, producer, manager, but in that of animators who organize the follow-up after the performance so as to avoid any feeling of powerlessness on the part of actors and audience.

12.7. Conclusion

This book promised an answer to the question: what is the educative role of theatre in processes of social change and development, and how is the use of theatre as a small-scale medium to be evaluated in realizing development projects based on a participatory or interventionist model?

As can be seen from the numerous case studies inthe book, popular theatre, and especially theatre for development, has certainly played an intervening role in social development and change. Some of these initiatives were merely intended to direct part of the population in a particular direction, so that they could assess their situation and thus change it in a modest yet efficient way. Other initiatives had the purpose of bringing about a complete social revolution.

In any event, the intervening role of theatre for development is educative by nature. The highest possible yield from this medium manifests itself within the field of adult education in its most varied potential. The medium is most frequently used by underprivileged communities seeking a productive life with a higher output than they had before. With these communities, the strength of the medium lies not so much in the transmission of knowledge or in the training of skills, but more with the determination of an attitude. In this sense, the value of the educative intervention through theatre concentrates on initiative, inspiration, stimulation, motivation and consciousness-raising of the public to maintain a measure of self-reliance within development processes, by which the economic independence of the community, as well as the provision of its cultural self-respect, is guaranteed.

In comparison with other educative media, the impact of theatre for development within adult education in developing countries is of a modest nature. Yet the medium has proved to be effective, because in the artistic process, continual attention was paid to a higher measure of participation from the target group in the creative process. This was achieved through the use of locally supplied performing artists, through the working procedure and through emphasis on the educative value of the work process, rather than of the artistic product (the performance). This makes the medium potentially public oriented.

In the course of time attention has shifted from a sector policy in development work to a target group policy. The above mentioned qualities of the medium theatre-for-development have finally been tuned to the specific socio-cultural problems that rural and urban communities have to contend within the implementation of development initiatives from outside, as well as from within the community. These historic trends, the effectiveness and adequacy of these modest, small-scale and limited media in adult education in developing countries, can in the end only exert a positive influence.

Notes

Chapter II

1. See for a more detailed comparison between 'fundamental education' in the 1950s and 'basic education' as formulated in the 1970s a paper written by Camillo Bonanni, entitled 'Fundamental education and basic education: recollections and reflections', published in October 1977 by UNESCO (Paris) in their series *Notes, comments ...*, no. 14.

2. However, says Peter Berger (1977:136-151), the term 'conscientization' is not without political irony, because the oppressed are made conscious by those who are more conscious which, in essence, implies a vertical relationship between the conscientizer and the recipient. The left-wing ideologist and the right-wing politician, as well as the practically minded socio-cultural worker are all convinced that they know what is right for their clients. They all seek to improve the inhuman living conditions of their clients, starting from the premise that they themselves live in more human conditions. One may encourage or deplore this process, but it is of little help, says Berger, to call it 'conscientization'. Although initially Freire did not introduce the term in this way, in the hands of ideologists, politicians and officials 'conscientization' became another misleading eufemism for processes of change dictated by those who considered themselves more conscious than their target group. And as Berger rightfully says: no one is more conscious than anyone else, different individuals are conscious of different things. Therefore a better term would nowadays be 'conversion' which denotes the missionary character of the process: a mixture of arrogance ('I know better') and charity ('I want to save you').

3. CEBEMO stands for Catholic Organization for Joint Financing of Development Programmes; NOVIB stands for the Netherlands Organization for Development Cooperation; HIVOS for the Humanistic Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries; and ICCO stands for Interchurch Coordination Committee for Development Projects.

4. As regards the indigenous transfer of knowledge initially studies were made of the traditional apprenticeship systems. For this, see for example P.H. Coombs and M. Ahmed's Attacking Rural *Poverty; How Nonformal Education Can Help (Baltimore, The John* Hopkins University Press, 1974, pp.140-141).

5. Inhowfar the village-gongman might be of use, has been studied for West Africa by F.O. Ugboajah, and is described in his article 'Developing Indigenous Communication in Nigeria', which appeared in the *Journal of Communication*, 29(1979)4, pp.40-45.

6. Finally there is a bulk of information on appropriate and intermediate technology articles in relationship with local or traditional technology. For further reading, however, I think, a small selection will do. C.H. Soysa, for example, has provided us with a case-study on the 'Sharing of Traditional Technology' on Sri Lanka. The article appeared in the *International Development Review*, 19(1977)1, pp.3-6. 'How Technology Should Seek Tradition' is a case-study on Ghana, by G. Benneh, which appeared in *Ceres*, 3(1970)5, pp.29-33. 'Introducing Technology: The Need to Consider Local Culture' by D.K. Emmerson includes a case-study on the introduction of technology in fishing communities

on Java. It appeared in the *International Development Review*, 19(1977)1, pp.17-20. Articles of a more general nature are 'The Impact of Alien Technology' by S.Kassapu, which appeared in *Ceres*, 12(1979)1, pp.29-33; 'In Search of an Appropriate Technology' by D. Schroeder and 'The Suppliers and Purchasers of Technology: A Conflict of Interests' by D. Goulet, both of which appeared in the *International Development Review*, 18(1976)3, pp.3- 7 and 14-20; and finally 'A Plea for Intermediate Technology' by E.F.Schumacher, which appeared in *Ceres*, 1(1968)3, pp.29-31.

7. Also enlightening, in this respect, is P. M. Warren's article entitled Indigenous Knowledge Systems for Activating Local Decision-Making Groups in Rural Development', which appeared in *Communication for Group Transformation in Development*, edited by G.C. Chu, S.A. Rahim and D.L. Kincaid (Honolulu, East-West Communication Institute,1976, pp.307-333).

8. See on the subject of 'barefoot architects' an article of Carlo Testo, entitled 'Appropriate Architecture' and published in *Developments*, XXI (1979)2: 53-54. Another article on the subject written by Philip Langley and Safall Fall is entitled 'The peasant architect' and published in CERES, 8(1975)6: 38-40.

Chapter III

1. A short but clear article on how Buddha's teaching balances an authentic view of this religion with modernization and development models is H. Jayasena's article 'Some thoughts on Buddhism and Development' in *International Development Review*, 16(1974)2, pp.21-22.

2. How national governments see the protection of their 'national identity' and the 'cultural identity' of ethnic groups inside the boundaries of their country, has been clearly described, as regards Africa, by A. Cabral in the chapter 'National Culture: National Liberation and Culture', which is part of his collection of essays *Unity and Struggle*, published by Heinemann (London) in 1980.

As regards Latin America I have to refer to an article by Oswaldo Guayasamin, called L'identité culturelle, clef du développement de l'Amérique Latine', which appeared in *Cultures* (UNESCO), 3(1976)4:69-75. This article goes deeper into the three culture influences in Latin America, which are the Spanish-Mediterranean, the indigenous-Indian and the Afro-American influences.

As regards Asia in this context, an article of importance is 'Le développement culturel, l'identité national et l'évolution sociale en Asie', which also appeared in the UNESCO publication Cultures, 1(1974)4:139-158. A somewhat shorter article on this subject was written by Le Than Khoi, entitled 'In search of a national culture: striking a balance between tradition and modernity'. This article appeared in the FAO publication *CERES*, 4(1971)3: pp.34-37.

Finally I refer the reader, with regard to the Pacific, to a short article by R.C. Crocombe entitled 'Culture and Development: the Crucial issues in Pacific Development are Psychological, Social, Cultural and Political'. This appeared in *Agricultural Information Development Bulletin*, 6(1984)3: pp.20-23.

3. For a further historical examination of the use of the concept of 'alienation' according to the writings of Marx, I would like to refer to the following article of Adam Schaff: 'L'aliénation et l'action sociale' in *Diogène, Revue Internationale des Sciences Humaines*, 57(1967), p.76- 96.

4. The indicatory elements used by Lewis (1979:41) in order to distinguish between folk, popular and elite culture were taken from Truzzi.

5. 'Mode of production theory is a theory of models, and many of the problems associated with it are the familiar problems of relating abstract models to empirical reality. This appears strikingly in theories of transition, for in the model, transition from one mode to another is clear-cut and neatly

determined, with a sharp distinction between transitional and non-transitional periods (Southall 1985:282- 283)'. This citation is taken from an article of A. Southall, entitled 'Cities and modes of production' and published in *City and society; studies in urban ethnicity, life-style and class*, edited. A. Southall and P.J.M. Nas, Leiden, Leiden Development Studies, 1985. (Leiden Development Studies no.7)

One of the most described modes of production is the model Karl Wittfogel presented on the Asian mode of production. This specific model is of no further use to our argument. However, for those interested, I would like to refer to an interesting interview with Wittfogel, written by Korzec, under the title 'Karl Wittfogel en de Aziatische produktiewijze', and published in *Intermediair*, 15(1979)21, p.27-29.

6. For a brief description of the annual Festival of the Arts in Iran I refer to an article of P.R. Ryan in vol.17, no.4 of The *Drama Review* (1973: 33-50). Special attention is paid to The 7th Festival of Arts in Shiraz (Iran) in 1973.

7. For further information on this event, see the article 'Reclaiming Culture: Indigenous Performers Take Back Their Show' by Ross Kidd, which appeared in *Theaterwork*, 3(1982)1, pp.33-53, and the F. van Kreuningen's contribution on 'De IATA en het InheemsTheater' ('The IATA and the Indigenous Theatre'), which appeared in *Skript*,(1983)7/8, pp.28-29.

8. For the views of the Aboriginal-Islander Dance Theatre, see C. Dixon and C. Johnson's article on 'Theatre, Politics and the Australian Aboriginal', which appeared in the *Canadian Theatre Review, 29(1981)*, pp.33-36.

9. For the use of theatre as an educative and activating medium as used for and by Innuit in Canada, see R. Hummelen and D. Wildcat's article 'Popular Theatre in the Arctic', which appeared in *Adult Education and Development*, September 1984, no. 23, pp. 79-87.

10. Sami theatre has been described by F. van Don, in an article entitled 'Samisch theater ontworsteld aan predikers en christendom' (Samic theatre breaks away from preachers and Christianity), published in *Tribaal*, 2(1983)7: 25-26.

11. The Colombian ideas behind this Theatre of Identity, in which the study and the preservation of folklore play a central role, have been further developed in an article by M. Zapata Olivella, entitled 'Proyecto para desarrollar un Teatro Popular Identificador', which appeared in *Latin American Theatre Review*, 9(1975)1:55-62.

12. On Teatro Vivo from Guatamala there appeared a short article piece called 'Teatro Vivo: Theatre on the Edge', in *Theaterwork*, 2(1982)4, pp.22-24.

13. For further information on Tukak' Teatret see an article by John Rezmerski 'Tukak' Teatret' published in *Theaterwork*, 2(1982)5: 6-10.

14. In countries or cultures where TV has not yet reached, radio often is a very popular medium. 'Perhaps the most truly popular form of drama in Malawi is to be found on the radio. The relatively small area of Malawi, the high quality of transmission, the absence of a distracting TV service and the availability of cheap locally made Nzeru battery- operated radios help make radio a popular medium. The Malawi Broadcasting Corporation broadcasts literary plays in English...But far more popular are two soap-opera series of regular ChiChewa plays...', writes D. Kerr in 'Popular and Populist Theatre in Malawi', published in *Third World Popular Newsletter*, 1(1982)1, pp.43-48.

Chapter IV

1. 'Daarbij moet de lezer dezes in de gaten houden dat de leerstukken ontstonden in een tijd dat er sprake was vaneen goed georganiseerde arbeidersbeweging met een hoog klassenbewustzijn. (...). Wat de leerstukken volgens Brecht moesten leren aan de spelers was dat theorieën met de werkelijkheid gekonfronteerd moesten blijven worden, willen ze niet verstarren tot ideologieën' (Bourse n.d.: 12).

2. 'Nu is bij deze speciale term de moeilijkheid, dat er geen toneelstuk bestaat zonder episch element. De discussie over het woord zoals Brecht het gebruikte heeft dan ook toto een orgie van interpretaties geleid, die in feite voor zijn praktijk geen waarde hebben. Hij begreep dit tekort en legde steeds meer nadruk op zijn maatschappelijk doel: zijn drama moest het publiek dwingen deel te nemen aan de klassestrijd door te dialektiseren. Voor alles moet het toneel dat doen op 'naïve' wijze: het gaat niet enkel om regelrechte didaktiek, maar om te demonstreren en te onderwijzen op een aantrekkelijke, stimulerende manier' (Hunningher 1983: 145-146).

3. 'Episch' (open) kwam lijnrecht tegenover 'dramatisch' (gesloten) te staan en ging in dit begrippenpaar een formele tendens aanduiden die, zeker vandaag de dag, de traditionele genres doorkruist en heel in het bijzonder het geijkte onderscheid epiek/dramatiek op de helling zet. Als algemene kenmerken van de 'epische' of 'open' vorm stippen wij aan: panoramische veelheid van de vertelde feiten; losse en discontinue intrige; nadrukkelijke beklemtoning van de vertelde functie; band met en gerichtheid naar de werkelijkheid' (Van Berlaer-Hellemans 1979: 99).

4. '(...) voor Brecht bleef (...) de tekst en daarmee het ganse stuk in bouw en geleding absoluut hoofdzaak en daarmee onaantastbaar fundament van de toneelvoorstelling' (Hunningher 1983: 144).

5. For more extensive information about Augusto Boal's work with the group Teatro de la Arena (Sao Paulo, Brazil), I refer the reader to the article 'Más allá del ejemplo Europeo' by Fernando Peinoto, which appeared in the collection *Teatros y Politico* (pp.95-109), published in Buenos Aires by Ediciones de la Flor in 1969. This article gives an impression of the activities of Teatro de la Arena within the wider context of the Brazilian theatre of the time.

6. For further information on Newspaper Theatre as developed by Boal I refer to an article of Augusto Boal, entitled 'El teatro popular' (pp. 43-65) (Popular theatre), and published in a reader *'Teatro popular y cambio social en América Latina; panorama de una experiencia'* (Popular theatre and social change in Latin América: overview of an experience), edited by Sonia Gutierrez, and published by Educa, in San José (Costa Rica).

7. In 1971 Boal started writing the play Torquemada to relate of his own experiences in the Brazilian prison, and to expose the regime that ruled Brazil at the time. Part of the play was written in the Brazilian prison and, according to Schuch (1976:128), it was finished in Cuba and Argentina in the same year. During his exile he collaborated with various 'popular' theatre groups in Latin America, the U.S.A. and in Europe, like the *chicano* group Teatro Colectivo de Albuquerque (Martinez 1978:379).

8. 'Cualquiera que sea la forma que adopte el teatro popular, éste debe ser vital y vitalizador, entretenido, inteligente y provocador de la inteligencia popular. Lo esencial debe ser el contenido, las ideas, los problemas y conflictos que presente, que los caracteres de los personajes se correspondan con seres vivos, que refleje una verdad auténtica del pueblo' (Pica 1979: 70-71).

9. Except for an article written by E. Licher on performances of Brecht's plays by contemporary Asian companies, as staged during the 7th Brecht Festival and International Brecht Symposium organized by the Brecht Society in 1986 (Hong Kong). The article, entitled 'Brecht en Azië: overtuigingskracht ontleend aan vrijheid' (Brecht and Asia: persuasion derived from freedom), has been published in *Toneel Teatraal*, 108 (1987) 4:4-

8. 'Das Theater/Drama für die Entwicklung oder die Spiele für die Befreiung, wie ich es auch nennen würde, die seit den 70er Jahren in Botswana, Sambia, Nigeria, Tansania, auch Malawi versucht worden sind, reaktivieren einmal darstellerische Tätigkeiten, die aktiv ganze Dörfer and Stadtviertel erfassen, ähnlich den theatralischen Festen der vorbürglichen Kulturen. Ihre Initiatoren, ihre ersten Animateure, Amerikaner/Kanadier und Europäer, beziehen sich auf Konzepte, die selbsttätiges Darstellen besonders unterprivilegierter Gruppen, bäuerlicher und proletarischer Schichten, als Tätigkeiten der Veränderung, der kulturellen, geistigen Selbstbefreiung, der Öffnung begreifen. Diese Konzepte und Praktiken gehen zurück bis auf Brechts Lehrstück-Theater Ende der zwanziger, Anfang der dreissiger Jahre, in gewissem Masse auf das 'theatre-in-education', vor allem aber auf die emanzipativen Versuche selbsttätiger Bildung/Alphabetisierung und einer analogen theatralischen Kommunikation in Brasilien (Freire, Augusto Boal) (Fiebach 1986: 56-57)'. This citation is taken from an article of J. Fiebach, entitled 'Offenheit und Beweglichkeit theatralischer Kommunikation in Afrika: kulturelle Identitäten und internationale Aspekte' and published in Bayreuth African Studies Series, (1986)7, p.33-64.

10. For further reading on the so-called Teatro Nuevo in Latin America, and the specific place of the Cuban groups within this movement in the seventies, I refer to a special issue of Conjunto (Havana) number 39, January-March 1979, which deals with the subject of 'revolutionary theatre' exclusively.

Chapter V

1. Van de Erven (1985: 25-26) describes the influence of the students' revolts at the North Atlantic universities in the United States (Berkeley, 1964 and Columbia, 1965) and in Europe (Paris, 1968 and Berlin) on the development of theatre in the sixties and seventies. Particularly this demand for overt political commitment in the theatre returns later at the students' revolts in Maputo on 19th September 1964 (Barnes 1978: 35), in Bangkok on 4th October 1976 (Kaitaro 1979: 2) and at the various students' revolts in Chile, Argentina, Colombia and other Latin American countries in the sixties and the seventies (Solórzano 1972: 299-309; Vos 1986: 11; Bascunan 1986: 14).

2. 'De dramaturgische wortels die we in het agitproptheater terugvinden, zijn veelvuldig: Commedia dell'arte, het Middeleeuwse volkstheater, het theater van de jaarmarkten, circus, cabaret, variété, groteske, mysteriespelen, improvisatievormen enz. Het is moeilijk al deze wortels op één noemer te brengen' (Van Kerkhoven 1979: 144).

3. 'Zowel voor- als tegenstanders van dit soort theater hoort men dikwijls zeggen: 'Dit is geen theater meer bedrijven, dit is in de eerste plaats aan politiek doen' (Van Kerkhoven 1979: 140).

4. I have no intention to deal with revolutionary theatre exhaustingly in this book. That is why, in this context, I have deliberately refrained from a description of the use of theatre as a political instrument in aid of the Revolution in China, because its history (and therewith the quantity of the literature) are disproportionate. Yet I would like to enable the reader to check the rationality and the definition of problems of the documents concerned with the literature. Therefore I suggest for further reading 'Propaganda in Early Soviet and Contemporary Chinese Theatre', by R. Howard in Theatre Quarterly, (1977)27, pp.53-60; 'People's Theatre in China Since 1907' by R. Howard in *Theatre Quarterly* (1971)4,pp.67-82; the chapter 'Drama in the Fields' inserted in W. Hinton's book *Fanshen;*

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A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village, published by Vintage Books in New York (1966); 'Theatre in Revolution' by L.W. Snow, in *China Now* (London),48(1975), pp.2-5; 'The Stage as a Medium of Propaganda in Communist China' by F.W. Houn in Public Opinion Quarterly (Princeton), 23(1959)2, pp.223-235; 'A Decade Of Revolution in Peking Opera' by Chu Lan, in *Chinese Literature*, 9(1974), pp.85-94; 'Hua Guofeng and the Village Drama Movement in the North-West Shanxi Base Area, 1943-1945', by D. Holm in China Quarterly (1980) vol.84, pp.669-693; and finally 'Not just a pretty face' by J. Gittings in the *New Internationalist* 98(1981), pp.16-18.

5. On the use of culture, song and theatre in the liberated zones of South Vietnam, in order to continue to express the revolutionary idea behind the war, has been described in a contribution by Tran Dinh Van, entitled 'Artistic and Literary Life in the Liberated Zones of South Vietnam', which was inserted in *Vietnamese Studies* (Hanoi), 14(1967), pp.11-23.

6. See for post-revolutionary theatre in Nicaragua an article of Dineke Naeye and Rien Sprenger entitled 'Het verschijnsel van een koplamp', published in the reader 'Nederlanders naast Nicaragua tien jaar revolutie beleefd' (Dutch men next to Nicaragua; ten years of revolution lived through), Utrecht, Stichting Nicaragua Comité Nederland, 1989 (pp. 43-50). Another article written by Rien Sprenger is 'Volkstheater in Nicaragua' (Popular theatre in Nicaragua), published in the reader 'De bergen, de vogels en Sandino; cultuur in Nicaragua' (The Mountains, the birds and Sandino; culture in Nicaragua), edited by Klaas Wellinga and publised by Wereldvenster, Utrecht 1983.

7. There have been many publications on songs of protest and revolution. L. Vail and L. White wrote about the 'Plantation Protest: The History of a Mozambican Song' in the Journal of *Southern African Studies* (London) 5(1978)1, pp.1-25; on songs in aid of the war of liberation in Zimbabwe, M. Mzamane wrote an article entitled 'The People's Mood: The Voice of a Guerilla Poet' in *Review of African Political Economy*, vol.18(1980), pp.29-41; on battle songs by the South Indian Tamil poet Subramania Bharathiyar (1882-1921) in aid of the nationalist struggle in India, D. Dudden wrote an article entitled 'The Songs and Revolution of Baharathi' which appeared in *Imperialism and Revolution in South Asia* edited by K. Gough and H.P. Sharma, published by Monthly Review Press in New York,(1973).

8. As, for the remainder of this book, Chile is outside the scope of my studies, I would like to give the reader nonetheless some tips for possible further study and verification of my argumentation. As regards the effect of cultural dominance in Latin América, with examples specifically of cultural oppression in Chile, I refer the reader to the writings of Mattelart and Dorfman. As regards the complexity of cultural dominance in this continent, Ariel Dorfman's article 'Niveles de la dominación cultural en América Latina' particularly gives a good picture. This article appeared in *Ideologies and Literature: A Journal of Hispanic and Iusobrazilian Literatures*, 2 (1980) 6, pp.54-89). But also P. Brennan's short article 'Schrijver Ariel Dorfman: De Toestand in Chili is te ernstig om niet te lachen' 'Author Ariel Dorfman: The Situation in Chile is too Serious Not to Laugh'], which appeared in the *Haagse Post* (no. 36, 1978, pp. 42-47) is worthwhile reading with respect to this. A third general article on the function of 'Cultural Work in the Struggle for Socialism' in Chile appeared in *Wedge; A Revolutionary Magazine of Cultural Practice and Theory*, 1(1977), pp.9-13.

Much has been written on the theatre in the period that the Unidad Popular flourished. Worthwhile reading in this context is the article by A. Skármeta entitled 'Teatro y Sociedad en Chile durante la Unidad Popular y sus antecedentes', which appeared in *Arte, Sociedad, Ideologia*, no. 7, pp. 59-66. On the Chilean theatre in the period 1971- 1973 there appeared two articles, viz. 'Chilean Theatre: 1971-1973' by H. Ehrmann, in the *Latin American Theatre Review*, 7(1974) 2, pp. 39-43, and 'Teatro Social-Popular en Chile: 1971-1973' by P. Bravo-Elizondo, which appeared in *Literatura Chilena en el Exilio*, 1(1977)2, pp.2-3. Articles of a more general nature on theatre in Chile of the period are 'Reflections in the Chilean Theatre' by J. Diaz, which appeared in *The Drama Review*, 14(1970), pp.84-86; 'Letters from Santiago' by J. Brister, which appeared in *Index on Censorship*, 9(1980)1,

pp.55-60; 'Zur Entwicklung des Chilenischen Theaters von der Jahrhundertwende bis zur Unidad Popular' by C. Cerda and 'Teatro Lauraro: Kämpfendes Theater für das Volk Chiles' by W. Grahl, both appearing in the collection *Material zum Theater, Theaterarbeit in Lateinamerika*, published by the Verband des Theaterschaffenden der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik in Berlin, 1976.

On the theatre after 1973, since the socialist regime of Allende was violently ended, was written by S. Cespedes 'Theatre in the Concentration Camps of Chile' in *Theatre Quarterly*, 6(1976)24, pp.13-20; by A. Acker 'The Bicycle versus the Helicopters; Cultural Resistance in Chile Today' in *This Magazine*, 13(1979) 5/6, pp. 35-37; in *Expresion Teatral Poblacional 1973-82*, written by C. Ochsenius, and published by CENECA, in Santiago de Chile (1983).

A lot has been published particularly on the songs of protest which were circulated during the rule and after the fall of the Unidad Popular. I would like to call attention to M. Cabezas 'The Chilean New Song' published in *Index on Censorship*, 6(1974)4, pp.30-36; A. Dorfman 'Chile: Cultural Resistance to Imperialism' in *Young Cinema and Theatre* (Prague), 2(1978) pp.2-9; M. Mattelart 'El Conformismo Revoltoso de la Canción Popular' in the collection *Ideología y Medios de Comunicación*, edited by R. Echeverria et.al., published by the Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Nacional in Buenos Aires (1973).

For the development of the Chilean theatre under the democratic civilian régime of President Allende as well as under the military régime of Pinochet, I refer the reader to two essays published in *Teatro Chileno de la Crisis Institucional 1973-1980 (Antología Crítica)*. This anthology was published by the Centro de Indagación y Expresión Cultural y Artística (CENECA; Chile) and the University of Minnesota, in its Minnesota Latin American Series, in 1982. In this anthology Maria de la Luz Hurtado and Carlos Ochsenius wrote 'Transformaciones del Teatro Chileno en la Década del '70' and 'El Teatro Chileno Bajo el Autoritarismo: 1973-1980' (pp. 1-53).

9. For the theatre of liberation in South Africa I refer to Mshengu's article 'After Soweto: People's Theatre and the Political Struggle in South Africa' appearing in Theatre *Quarterly*, 9(1979)33, pp.31-38 and P. Cavigan's article 'Life on Stage: A Sample of Black Theatre' published in *Media Development*, 32(1985)3, pp.28-32.

10. 'Yippies' referred to Y.I.P. which stood for Youth International Party, young people who choose for a non-conformintic way of life in the United States, during the 1960s.

11. The notion 'teatro campesino' was initially used for various theatrical experiences in the South of the United States. Especially the theatre developed by Luis Valdez, at the end of the 1960s, to conscientisize Mexican migrant workers and illegal labourers of their civil rights. An alternative term used to denote these Mexican initiatives is 'chicano theatre'.

12. 'Vlak voor de revolutie, in 1958, was door acht acteurs *Teatro Estudio* opgericht dat, heel gewaagd voor die tijd, een echt nationaal theater wilde zijn, zoals in een klandistien manifest gesteld werd. (...) In 1959 -de revolutie is dan kersvers- geven ze een tweede manifest uit waarin ze de noodzaak van militant theater uit de doeken doen' (Van Duin 1983: 29-30).

13. '(...) om theater te gaan maken voor en over de boeren en over de veranderingen die de revolutie voor het boerenbestaan met zich meebracht' (Van Duin 1983: 38).

14. 'Operation Topes' named after the village where Escambray started, Topes de Collantes, has been described at length in 'El Teatro un Arma Eficaz al Servicio de la Revolución' written by the Grupo Teatro Escambray, and included in: Sonia Gutiérrez (ed.), *Teatro Popular y Cambio Social en América Latina; Panorama de una Experiencia*, San José, Editorial Universitaria Centroamericana (EDUCA), 1979 (pp. 234-238).

15. On the Black Tent Theatre in Japan there have been publications particularly by D. Goodman, in his article 'Japanese Political Theatre in Context', which appeared in The Drama Review, 19(1975)2, pp.37-42; by T. Kaitaro in his article 'The Asian Political Theatres' published in *Ampo; Japan-Asia Quarterly Review*, vol.11(1979), pp.1-9.

Chapter VI

1. 'In een tijd dat kranten onbekend waren en de radio niet bestond vervulde de narrenpraat in een wajangvoorstelling een zeer belangrijke rol als nieuwsbron. Ook over gebeurtenissen buiten het dorp, over zaken van landsbelang kregen de toeschouwers te horen. Met spanning werd uitgekeken naar deze momenten. Deze voorlichtende functie van de dalang is tot op vandaag bewaard gebleven' (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebrata 1973: 117-118).

2. Het spel omvat zo'n honderd figuren, waaronder we prins Diponegoro, de held van de Java-oorlog (1830-1835) aantreffen, negentiende-eeuwse Nederlanders in felblauwe uniformen met tressen en kokardes, soldaten van het Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch leger, gebrilde Japanse officieren, Indonesische vrijheidsstrijders en verder personen uit allerlei lagen van de Indonesische bevolking. Met behulp van deze poppen kunnen verhalen over de strijd om de onafhankelijkheid worden opgevoerd. Er zijn bommen, granaten, geweren, pijlen, een geblakerde boom, een lessenaar met een glaasje water erop voor redenaars, een aandachtig luisterende vergadering waar in het gehoor twee met beweegbare armen die voor protest of interpellatie geheven kunnen worden. Leden van de Volksraad in deftig zwart met goud en natuurlijk ook de bekende narren van het traditionele wajang-tonceel in de tegenwoordig nog algemene regionale dracht, want, zegt men niet op Java 'zolang als de narren bij ons zijn kan ons niets ernstigs gebeuren'?' (Veldhuisen-Djajasoebrata 1973: 119).

3. '*Dalangs* werden en worden nog steeds onder druk gezet om zich beschikbaar te stellen als medium voor indoctrinatie: politiek, sociaal en economisch. Dit betekende na de regimewisseling die volgde op de coup d'état van 1965 dat propaganda gemaakt moest worden tegen maatschappelijke krachten die de nieuwe machthebbers niet welgevallig waren, voorts propaganda voor de *Repelita*, d.i. het vijfjarenplan, propaganda voor het gebruik van kunstmeststoffen en chemische verdelgingsmiddelen van schadelijk gedierte, propaganda voor family-planning, enz.' (Ras 1978: 457).

4. 'De samenleving mag dan veranderen, het geloof in traditionele middelen is taai' (Clara van Groenendael 1982: 71).

5. 'Tot slot werd het thema nog in een ruimer kader geplaatst, namelijk tegen de achtergrond van een noodzakelijk evenwicht tussen het inwoners-aantal en de opbrengst van het land, het belangrijkste thema van het Vijfjarenplan (...)' (Clara van Groenendael 1982: 287).

6. Prins: 'Wij zijn bedroefd omdat ze door een brahmaan tot vrouw genomen is, en niet door iemand van haar eigen stand.(...)'.
Merdah: 'Hoe zou de reactie zijn, als ze genomen was door een arme man? (...)'.
Twalèn: 'Ach, leven is werken. Een arm en een rijk man moeten werken tegenwoordig. Dan is standsverschil onbelangrijk. Werk is goed voor de mens zeggen ze (...)'.
Merdah: 'Zeg, ik heb gehoord dat ze door vijf mannen gedeeld wordt, de brahmaan en zijn 4 broers (...)'.
Twalèn: 'Als dat waar is, dan heeft het bureau van de family planning succes. Vijf mannen per vrouw, die totaal vier kinderen mag, is beter dan vijf vrouwen per man, die ieder vier kinderen mogen (...)' (Hinzler 1975: 37)'.

Chapter VII

1. Disregarding the consumers of this folk art, which are mostly tourists, urban development has given an enormous boost to the informal economic sector. In the cities as, for example, the cities in the Latin American Andes, there live quite a lot of indigenous Indian families who cannot find a job on the formal labour-market. To stay alive they produce this kind of handmade folk art at home or in small workshops, and sell it on the street. Recently this informal economic sector has begun to be taken increasingly serious by town planners, economists and sociologists.

2. For recent information about the theatrical workshops organized by SEP I would like to refer to an article of F. Eickholt, entitled 'De emigrant: indiaanse boeren in Oaxaca spelen hun leven' (The emigrant: Indian peasants in Oaxaca act out their 'lives'), published in *Tribaal*, 2(1983):23-24.

3. 'Dit is het klimaat waarin teatermakers zich genoodzaakt zien een andere weg in te slaan. Het nieuwe teater dat hieruit voortkomt laat zich overigens niet generaliseren. Er zijn punten van overeenkomt maar men kan niet spreken van een homogene beweging. De politieke omstandigheden in de diverse Latijnsamerikaanse landen, waar het teater zich op baseert of tegen verzet zijn zeer uiteenlopend en bepalen de ontwikkelingen op verschillende wijzen. Maar de grondtoon die doorklinkt wijst op een streven naar ekonomiese en kulturele onafhankelijkheid. De bestaande dramaturgie (al of niet geimporteerd) was ternauwernood een spiegel van de realiteit, laat staan dat ze bijdroeg aan de verandering daarvan. Als men die wilde veranderen, moest men zich richten tot het volk, als men zich wilde richten tot het volk moest men die opzoeken op straat, in de favelas (...). Als in de loop van de jaren zeventig de situatie in Latijnsamerika drasties wordt gewijzigd en de diktatuur in Bolivia, Uruguay, Chili, Argentinië, Colombia (...) elkaar opvolgen is er desalniettemin een teaterkultuur gegroeid, waarvan de sporen niet meer uit te wissen zijn' (Royaards 1981: 23-26).

Chapter VIII

1. The same has been done in East Africa. See: Bartlett, M. (1951) 'Africans teach Africans by the Drama' in *New Commonwealth* 21, pp. 346- 347; Carr, D.E. 'Demonstration Teams in Uganda' in *Fundamental Education*, 3 (1951) 3/4: 100-104.

2. For a rather critical description of Kampala National Theatre, see: Wole Soyinka's article, entitled 'Towards a true drama', published in *Nigerian Magazine*, no.75 (1962): 58-60.

3. *Laedza Batanani* is the most comprehensively documented project in this field known to me. It is a theatre-for-development project which has been discussed at great length by Ross Kidd, sometimes in collaboration with Martin Byram. In order to have the reader find his own way in the literature, I will now give some modest suggestions, motivated by the sources I have used. Ross Kidd has described this project in an article 'People'sTheatre, Conscientization and Struggle', which appeared in *International Foundation for Development (IFDA) Dossier*, no.30, July/ August 1982, pp.17-25, and in Media Development, 27(1980)3, pp.10-14. Kidd compared the same project with the Chikwakwa Theatre in Zambia in the article 'Liberation or Domestication: Popular Theatre and Non-Formal Education in Africa', which appeared in *Young Cinema and Theatre*, no.4, 1982, pp.8-17, and in *Educational Broadcasting International* 12(1979)1, pp.3-9, and in an abridged version in *Development Communication Report*, no.28, October 1979, pp.1 and 5-6.

In collaboration with Martin Byram, Kidd has written the following articles about the *Laedza Batanani* experience: 'Encouraging Participation in Development: Laedza Batanani Case Studies' in *Indian Journal of Adult Education*, 40(1979)8, pp.17-29; 'Laedza Batanani: Let's Come together, work together' in *World Education Reports*, no.21, 1980, pp.12-13; 'The Performing Arts: Culture as a Tool for Development in Botswana' in *Botswana Notes and Records*, no.10,1980, pp.81-90; 'Performing

Arts and Community Education in Botswana', in *Community Development Journal*, 13(1978) no.3, pp.170-178; 'People's Theatre as an Appropriate Media', in *Appropriate Technology*, 7(1980)2, pp.21-23; and 'Demystifying Pseudo- Freirian Development: The Case of Laedza Batanani', in *Community Development Journal*, 17(1982)2, pp.91-105.

4. OXFAM stands for Oxford Committee for Famine Relief. OXFAM is a non-governmental organization founded in 1942, renamed in the early 1950s and based in Oxford, Great Britain. The institution aims to provide funds and expertise to organisations in the Third World concerned with improving the lives of poor people, with an emphasis on long-term developement work.

5. For further information on Ujamaa villages in Tanzania see 'Ujamaa villages in Tanzania: analysis of a social experiment', written by Michaela von Freyhold and published by Monthly Review Press, London 1979.

6. A comparison as regards intentions and results between the Laedza Batanani Workshop (Botswana) and the Benue Workshop (Nigeria) is given by Ross Kidd in his article 'Botswana, Nigeria: Participatory Drama, Popular Analysis and Conscientizing the Development Worker', published in the *Reading Rural Development Communications Bulletin*, no. 16, December 1982, pp. 19-25.

7. In 1984 in Cameroun a national workshop was organized on theatre for integrated rural development by the University of Yaounde, sponsored by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), OXFAM (Quebec), the German International Development Foundation (...) and the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA). The workshop received the kind cooperation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific research and the Ministry of Agriculture in Cameroun.

The approach, set-up and results of this workshop are to be found in the workshop report: *Hammocks and bridges; report of the workshop on theatre for integrated rural development, Kumba (Cameroun) 1-16 December 1984. The report has been compiled and edited by Prof. Hansel Ndumbe Eyoh.* The report has been published by the theatre section of the faculty of Letters and Social Sciences (University of Yaounde) in close cooperation and collaboration with the Union of African Performing Artists (UAPA) in Yaounde, March 1985.

More information about this workshop is to be found in the *Cameroun Tribune* of Wednesday, January 23, 1985, (page 2), under the title: 'And now, it's theatre for development'. Furthermore an article of Ndumbe Eyoh appeared in the FAO Journal Ideas and Action, (1985),6, entitled: 'Improvisation and traditional African theatre'.

In 1981 in Swaziland a national workshop was organized on theatre for integrated development by the Division of Extra-Mural Services of the University College of Swaziland, sponsored by the US Agency for International Development (US-AID). The workshop received further support of the Ministries of Health and of Education, and of the Programme for Better Family Planning. The approach, the set-up and the results of this workshop were written down in the workshop report: *The report of the workshop on Theatre for Integrated Development, held at Nhlangano Farmer Training Centre, 4-16 October 1981.* The report has been compiled by L. Byram, F. Moitse and A. Boeren, and was published by the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the University College of Swaziland in November 1981.

The workshop coordinators have published several additional articles on this event in various journals. An article written by M. Byram appeared in *Sonolux Information*, number 6, September 1982 (pp.11-14), and in *Theaterwork*, volume 3 (1983), number 5 (pp.52-59). Another article, written by A. Boeren, appeared in *Third World Popular Theatre Newsletter*, number 3, 1983 (pp.10-11), under the title: 'Theatre in Swaziland'.

More information about the activities of the Contemporary Cultural Studies Unit at Natal University (South Africa) in the field of popular culture and the performing arts in South Africa has been published in a seminar report, entitled: *Popular culture and performance in South Africa*. The

report has been compiled by Ian Steadman, and was published by the Contemporary Cultural Studies Unit of the University of Natal in Durban, in April 1986. In 1983 in Harare for the first time an international pan-African workshop-cum-seminar was organized. Various formal and informal reports on this event have been written. Ross Kidd published a diary on the workshop, presenting his personal impressions and opinions, entitled: *From people's theatre for revolution to popular theatre for reconstruction: diary of a Zimbabwean workshop*, published by the Centre for the Study of Education in Developing Countries (CESO), The Hague, 1984. Ngugi wa Mirii and Kimani Gecau published a brief account on the Zimbabwe workshop in the *Foundation for Education with Production Newsletter*, number 8, September 1983 (pp.2-14), entitled: 'Community Theatre Workshop held in Harare, July 2-8, 1983'.

Chapter IX

1. For a scenario of a puppet-show, designed by the Xavier Institute of Communication, see the article 'Khel Dori Ka: A Selection', which appeared in *Adult Education and Development*, no.23 (1984), pp.99-101.

Chapter X

1. In the second half of the seventies there have appeared quite some publications on participatory research and action research. Budd L. Hall wrote two short but enlightening articles, the first of which was called 'Participatory Research: an Approach for Change', which appeared in *Convergence*, 8(1975)2, pp.24-32. The second article appeared in the *International Development Review*, 19(1977)4, pp.23-26, entitled 'Participatory Research: Expanding the Base of Analysis'. On the relationship between participatory research and literacy there appeared a short article by L.C. Vaccaro in *Literacy Work*, 7(1978)1, pp.13-19, entitled 'Participation--A Word to Remember'.

Articles which particularly distinguish between academic research in aid of economic development and carried out by outsiders on the one hand, and participatory research in aid of meeting the felt human needs and carried out by insiders, are 'Participacion--si' by C.Z. Flórez, which appeared in *Review*, 21(1979)1, pp.8-12, and 'People's Participation and Development' by K. Bhasin and B. Malik, published in *Prisma* no.8, 1977, pp.55-66.

The evaluation(s) of participatory research into, and participatory use of the media, can be found in Colin Frazer's article in *Ceres*, 14(1981)1, pp.37-40, which is called 'Promoting People's Participation'. This article mainly deals with the use of audio-visual communication and in particular video. As regards radio, chapter Seven (pp. 194-219) 'Participation: how knowledge and action are organized, orchestrated and communicated within the system' in R.G. Havelock and A.M. Huberman's book *Solving Educational Problems: The Theory and Reality of Innovation in Developing Countries* is of some importance. Preparations for this book were made under the auspices of the international Bureau of Education, and it was published by UNESCO (Paris) in 1977.

The application of participatory research within the context of a project has been described in M.L. Swantz's article 'Participatory Research as a Tool for Training: The Jipemoyo Project in Tanzania'. This article appeared in the UNICEF-publication *Carnets de l'Enfance*, no.41, 19.., pp.94-109. On the other hand, this article devotes more of its attention to the reasons why this method of research is particularly suitable to support aid projects which aim at groups of the population with a strong ethnic identity such as, in this case, the nomadic and pastoral Masai.

Finally I must refer to a most enlightening survey on action research, entitled 'Action-research: plaatsbepaling van een onderzoekstype (Action Research: Position-finding of a Type of Research)', written by H.J. v.d. Braak, which appeared in Intermediair 23rd May, 1975.

2. 'Animation is derived from the French *animation socio-cultural* and refers to the work of the animateur, a community worker who helps people to build and participate in community life, to articulate their own grievances and aspirations in a public context, and often, to make art from the material of their daily lifes... Animation may be defined as the stimulus to the mental, physical and emotional life of people in an area which moves them to undertake a range of experiences through which they find a greater degree of self-realisation, self-expression and awareness of belonging to a community over the development of which they can exercise an influence. In urban societies today this stimulus seldom arises spontaneously from the circumstances of daily life, but has to be contrived as something additional to the environment. This cautious and tortured prose attempts to bridge the gap between community cultural workers who see themselves as helping to transform consciousness so that people can act to change the culture and the society, and bureaucrats who see animation as a kind of activity-boosterism which should present no threat to the status quo (Adams and Goldbard 1982:11)'. This citation is taken from an article, entitled 'Animation: What's in the Name'? written by D. Adams, and A. Goldbard, and published *Theaterwork*, 2 (1982) 4, pp. 11/13

Another definition is taken from Schramm (1977: 251): 'The animateur is an organizer and group leader, who is trained in a short course (...) and is expected to assemble the group, lead the discussion, and take responsibility for the feedback to the station. This is taken from W. Schramm's *Big media, little media; tools and technologies for instruction,* (Beverly Hills/London, Sage Publications, 1977.)

3. As the book concerned is historical rather than didactic in nature, in the main text I have left undiscussed any further distinction of various psychological or sociological applications of theatre-based games and the many forms of role-play. However, as these games are important in development-oriented theatre, I would like to offer the reader some literature for further reading. On role-play there is a reader entitled *Rollenspiel als Methode sozialen Lernens*, compiled by Barbara Kochan and published in Königstein by Athenäum in 1981. In this context the following articles on simulation may be of interest. An article giving a survey is that by L.A. Broer and G. Vandepitte entitled 'Simulatiespelen als Illustratie' ('Simulation as Illustration'), in *Intermediair*, volume 9/9th year (1973), number 42 (pp.15-19). A well-ordered short book on the use of simulation in formal education is '*Simulation in the Classroom*' by J.L. Taylor and R. Walford, published in Harmondsworth by Penguin Books in 1972. And finally a discussion-paper entitled 'Simulations and Adult Learning for Development', edited by J. Oxenham and presented at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), 11-12 December 1980.

In a socio-drama a group of people from the same social surroundings (e.g. a factory) re-enact existing situations in those same surroundings. In socio-drama the interaction within the group is analysed. Socio-drama may approach psychodrama. In socio-drama as used in Gestalt therapy, the player plays himself. Other players are no more than a means for him to understand his own psyche. The other players do not necessarily come from the 'leading' man's reality. The terms 'socio- drama' and 'role-play' are usually rather confusing. In a role-play the player chooses a role he knows from his own every day life (a role he plays himself or someone else in his social surroundings). In a role-play one acts with others who do not have to come from the player's immediate surroundings. Role-play and socio-drama are not necessarily therapeutic. They are means, however, to raise the consciousness of one's own living conditions and those of others.

Regarding the arguments in this chapter, I have attuned my references to literature concerned with psychodrama and sociodrama to the Latin American context. Important is the article 'El Psicodrama', in which J. Fanchette relates psychodrama as a form of therapy with the Method Acting approach in actor-training from the moment Stanislavski put down in writing his views on 'Naturalism' in acting, to its latest applications in the Actors' Studio in New York. The article appeared in *La Cabra, Revista de Teatro* (UNAM), volume 3(1975), number 15(pp.12-16).

On sociodrama another appendix was added to the *Sintesis Cultural*, published by IICE (Mexico City), volume 3 (1982) number 1, entitled 'El Sociodrama' and written by A. Moises. The aforementioned organization ALER in Ecuador published a small book in its series Manuales de Capacitacion

(no.9), entitled *El Sociodrama*, in 1986, which was especially created to help future adult educators on their way so they could organize sociodramas.

4. The drama manual *Creative Dramatics Trainers' Manual*, published by the Mindanao Sulu Pastoral Conference Secretariat (MSPCS) in Davao City (Philippines) in 1980, therefore, draws heavily on the ideas of Boal, particularly as they are formulated in *Teatro del Opprimido*.

5. The greater part of the information in this paragraph was taken from two booklets written by Karl Gaspar and his team. These booklets were *Creative Dramatics Trainers' Manual* (Davao City, MSPCS, 1980) and *Creative Dramatics' Trainers' Manual* (Hong Kong, Plough Publications, 1981). Additional materials were taken from *Community Theatre: The Mindanao Experience; Selected Readings on Popular Theater based on the Proceedings of the First Mindanao Forum on Community Theater*, published by the Kulturang Atin Foundation Inc. (Davao City 1983), and from the *Mindanao Sulu Pastoral Conference Creative Dramatics Kit*, published by the Mindanao Sulu Pastoral Conference Secretariate (MSPCS), Davao City 1978.

Furthermore, use has been made of the following five articles, which are, in fact, later versions of the aforementioned books and documents or of information brochures and interviews: 'Training popular Theatre Workers in the Philippines', written by D. Evans and published in *Convergence*, 18 (1985) 4/4 (pp. 140-142); 'The history of the growth and development of creative dramatics in Mindanao-Sulu, Philippines, written by Karl Gaspar and published in the *Third World Popular Theatre Newsletter*, 1(1982)1 (pp. 19-32); 'PETA: theatre of conscience; an interview with Gardy Labad', written by A. Smith and published in *Theaterwork*, 3 (1983)3 (pp. 55-59); 'Central Institute of Theatre Arts (PETA) towards a curriculum for a people's theatre', published in *Sonolux Information*, September 1982, number 6 (pp. 3-5); 'The Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA)', published in *Sonolux Information*, September 1982, number 6 (pp. 6-10).

6. Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the Kamiriithu Community Educational and Cultural Centre Project has been discussed at length by R. Kidd in 'Popular Theatre and Popular Struggle in Kenya' in *Theaterwork*, 2(1982)6 pp.47- 61; D. Correia in 'The People of Kamirithu and Their Play', in Ideas and Action (FAO), no.124, pp.7-10; A. Rajab 'Detained in Kenya' in *Index on Censorship*, 7(1978)3, pp.7-10; Ngugi wa Thiong'o 'The making of a rebel' in *Index on Censorship*, 9(1980)3, pp.20-24; G. Moore 'Images de la revolution dans le théatre Africain' published in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, septembre 1982, p.23.

Chapter XI

1. 'In terms of a very widespread belief, the 'village community' had more or less universally the 'village panchayat' as its organ. (...) Let us simply say for the moment that traditionally it may designate any assembly for the purposes of justice or arbitration, whatever its size; in short it is a customary court in a very broad sense, in the case of the caste assembly, an executive and even legislative organ' (Dumont 1972: 213).

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